

ST. FRANCIS POLISH NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace! — St. Francis

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Father Andrew Koterba, Pastor

Lillian Zaradich, Council Chair

CHRISTMAS EVE (Shepherd's Mass)

Wednesday, December 24, 2008

9:00 PM - Celebration of the Eucharist

Niech Bedze pochwalony Jezus Chrystus. **R/. Na wieki, wiekow Amen.**

Praised be the Lord, Jesus Christ. **R/. Now and forever. Amen.**

9:00 AM - "Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord"

READING I - Is 9, 1-6

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Ps 96, 12, 2-3, 11-12, 13

R/: Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord

Sing to the Lord a new song; Sing to the Lord all you lands.

Sing to the Lord; bless his name.

R/: Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord

Announce his salvation, day after day. Tell his glory among the nations.

Among all peoples, his wondrous deeds.

R/: Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord

Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice; let the sea and what fills it resound;

let the plains be joyful and all that is in them! Then shall all the trees of the forest exult.

R/: Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord

They shall exult before the Lord, for he comes; for he comes to rule the earth.

He shall rule the world with justice and the peoples with his constancy.

R/: Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord

READING II - Titus 2, 11-14

ALLELUIA. Good News and great joy to all the world;

today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord. **ALLELUIA.**

GOSPEL - Luke 2, 1-14

A reading from the holy gospel according to St. Luke: **R/: Glory be to you, O Lord.**

In those days Caesar Augustus published a decree ordering a census of the whole world. This first census took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria. Everyone went to register, each to his own town. And so Joseph went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to David's town of Bethlehem—because he was of the house and lineage of David—to register with Mary, his espoused wife, who was with child.

While they were there the days of her confinement were completed. She gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the place where travelers lodged.

There were shepherds in the locality, living in the fields and keeping night watch by turn over their flock. The angel of the Lord appeared to them, and they were very much afraid. The angel said to them: "You have nothing to fear! I come to proclaim good news to you—tidings of great joy to be shared by the whole people. This day in David's city a savior has been born to you, the Messiah and Lord. Let this be a sign to you: in a manger you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes." Suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in high heaven, peace on earth to those on whom his favor rests."

This is the gospel of the Lord. **R/: Praise be to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

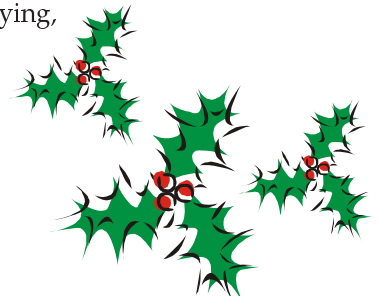
GENERAL CONCESSIONS: **God, Hear Us!**

OFFERTORY HYMN - "A Voice Cries Out"

OUR FATHER - page 95

COMMUNION HYMNS - "Let The Valleys Be Raised" and "Patience People"

RECESSIONAL HYMN - "Every Valley"



St. Francis Weekly "Kompositions"

REJOICE! ... CHRIST IS BORN TODAY! CHRISTMAS ARRIVES!

The day finally comes. "While they were there (in Bethlehem), the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth." (Luke 2; 6,7)

NOW, the Christmas celebration truly begins. We offer gifts of love to one another as we share in Mary's own hope and joy. We have received the greatest gift; Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Savior. It's a good time to recall Mary's words to her cousin Elizabeth, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my savior." (Luke 1:47)

Divine life has entered our world and inflamed it with God's love; "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He looked favorably on His people and redeemed them" (Luke 1:68)

WHAT DOES THE "CRECHE" SYMBOLIZE?

Francis called it a "creche," the French word for cradle. Francis created the first creche using real people, a real manger, a real ox and ass and real shepherds.

The Incarnation - Christmas - was a key component in the spirituality of Francis. He wanted to celebrate the Incarnation in a special way. He wanted to do something that would help people remember the Christ Child and how He was born in Bethlehem. Francis wanted people to see and experience how He lay in a manger with an ox and ass standing by - how He lay upon the hay where He had been placed.

It was Christmas Eve in the year 1223, at the appointed time, Franciscan Brothers came to the new Bethlehem. Men, women, and children from the area also came to celebrate. The torches they carried lit up the night to come and adore Him. All were filled with joy over the mystery of the Incarnation. And a great tradition began.

As you look upon your Nativity set, may you remember and celebrate again God's love for His creation. To show His abundant love, mercy, and forgiveness, He became a person like us. This is what the creche symbolizes!

—From The Life of St. Francis by Thomas of Celano -

'KEEP THE MESSAGE'

Few times are more sacred for a family or household than Christmas. Christmas time is rich in traditions which, despite modern commercial exploitation, still stir our hearts and imagination. The Christmas tree, the manger scene, the music and carols, the lights shining in the winter darkness joyfully proclaim the birth of Jesus Christ and call us to come and adore him.

These traditions and symbols bring people and families together and connect us with our ancient faith. And they respond surprisingly to modern needs as well. They uphold to so many precious realities presently endangered: birth, children, family, the earth itself. In celebrating Christmas then, 'keep their message for today in mind!'

In a world where nature and our environment are threatened, let us make our Christmas tree and manger scene reminders of the beauty and sacredness of nature. How closely at his coming did Jesus bind himself to the animals of the field, as well as to the earth and open sky!

Remembering the poor shepherds and the circumstances of Christ's birth, so marked by poverty, let us make them reminders of the forgotten poor of our world.

Let the Child and Joseph and Mary teach us the dignity and importance of children and families in a society so neglectful of them.

The Christmas season's rich traditions come from people throughout the world, from Spain, South America, Eastern Europe, and so many others. Let them remind us of the unity of all people as children of God.

Let us 'Keep the Message!'

ST. STEPHEN (d.34) December 26

FROM EARLY in the fourth century, the deacon Stephen has been honored by the Catholic Church on December 26, the day after Christ's birth. He is the first martyr, dying for his faith in Jesus, born of Mary. The story of his persecution and death before the Sanhedrin is told vividly in the Acts of the Apostles.

"As a deacon appointed by the apostles after Pentecost, Stephen was a man filled with grace and power, who worked great wonders and signs among the people. Certain members of the so-called 'Synagogue of Roman Freedmen' (that is, the Jews from Cyrene, Alexandria, Cilicia, and Asia) would undertake to engage Stephen in debate, but they proved no match for the wisdom and spirit with which he spoke.

"Those who listened to his words were stung to the heart; they ground their teeth in anger at him. Stephen meanwhile, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked to the sky above and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at God's right hand. 'Look!' he exclaimed, 'I see an opening in the sky and the Son of Man standing at God's right hand.' The onlookers were shouting aloud, holding their hands over their ears as they did so. Then they rushed at him as one man, dragged him out of the city, and began to stone him. The witnesses meanwhile were piling their cloaks at the feet of a young man named Saul. As Stephen was being stoned he could be heard praying, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.'"

"The love that brought Christ from heaven to earth raised Stephen from earth to heaven," says St. Fulgentius. Stephen's love gave him courage before an angry mob and prompted him to pray like Jesus for his persecutors.

St. Stephen, St. John the Apostle, and the Holy Innocents, whose feasts occur on the following days of December, are seen as special companions of Jesus. They are examples of the different ways of martyrdom for Christ. Stephen voluntarily accepted death and was executed for his faith. John willed to die for Christ, but was not martyred. The Holy Innocents died for Christ without understanding what was happening to them.

CHRISTMAS MIRACLES ...

Today marvel at the significance and meaning of the miracle of Christmas!

WISHING ALL A MERRY AND BLESSED CHRISTMAS!
FELIZ NAVIDAD! JOYEUX NOËL! BUON NATALE!
WESOLYCH! MERRY CHRISTMAS! SWIAT!

Christmas Celebration

SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT

Silent Night, Holy Night,
All is clam, all is bright
Round yon Virgin, Mother and Child,
Holy Infant so tender and mild.,
Sleep in heavenly peace.



CICHA NOC

Cicha noc, święta noc
Wszystko śpi atoli
Czuwa Józef z Marya
Kiedy Boska Dziecina
W błogiem pokoju śpi,
w błogiem pokoju śpi.

CHRIST IS BORN

Christ is born, Sing the joyful tidings;
Christ is born, God has sent His blessings.
Come rejoice, ye men of earth,
Now proclaim the Savior's birth
Christ is born, Christ is born, Christ is born.

GOD REST YEE MERRY GENTLEMEN

God rest yee merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
Remember Christ Our Saviour
Was born on Christmas Day,
To save us all from Satan's power,
When we were gone astray.

Refrain: O, tidings of comfort and joy
comfort and joy,
O, tidings of comfort and joy.

From God our heav'nly Father,
A blessed Angel came,
And unto certain Shepherds
Brought tidings of the same;
How that in Bethlehem was born
The Son of God by Name.

Refrain

The Shepherds at those tidings
Rejoiced much in mind
and left their flocks a-feeding
In tempest, storm and wind
And went to Bethlehem straight away,
The Son of God to find.

Refrain



O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL

O come all ye faithful, joyful & triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem,
Come and behold Him, Born the King of Angels

Refrain: O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord!

Sing choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, All glory in the highest

Repeat Refrain

Yea Lord we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning
Jesus, to Thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing

Repeat Refrain

JOY TO THE WORLD

Joy to the world! The Lord is come,
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heav'n and nature sing.
And heav'n and nature sing.
And heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the world! The Savior reigns;
Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH

Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o'er the plain;
And the montains in reply
Echo-ing their joyous strain.
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your gladsome strain prolong?
Say, what may be tidings be;
Which inspired your heav'nly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!