



ST. FRANCIS POLISH NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

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Christmas—December 25, 2019

Niech Bedze pochwalony Jezus Chrystus.

R/. Na wieki, wiekow Amen.

Praised be the Lord, Jesus Christ.

R/. Now and forever. Amen.

9:00 PM - *"O Come All Ye Faithful*

Mass Book page 63

READING I - Isaiah 52:7-10

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings glad tidings, announcing peace, bearing good news, announcing salvation, and saying to Zion, "Your God is King!" Hark! Your sentinels raise a cry, together they shout for joy, for they see directly, before their eyes, the LORD restoring Zion. Break out together in song, O ruins of Jerusalem! For the LORD comforts his people, he redeems Jerusalem. The LORD has bared his holy arm in the sight of all the nations; all the ends of the earth will behold the salvation of our God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM - Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6

R. All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God. Sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done wondrous deeds; his right hand has won victory for him, his holy arm.

R. All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God. The LORD has made his salvation known: in the sight of the nations he has revealed his justice. He has remembered his kindness and his faithfulness toward the house of Israel.

R. All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation by our God. Sing joyfully to the LORD, all you lands; break into song; sing praise.

R. All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God. Sing praise to the LORD with the harp, with the harp and melodious song. With trumpets and the sound of the horn sing joyfully before the King, the LORD.

R. All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.

READING II - Hebrews 1:1-6

Brothers and sisters: In times past, God spoke in partial and various ways to our ancestors through the prophets; in these last days, he has spoken to us through the Son, whom he made heir of all things and through whom he created the universe, who is the refulgence of his glory, the very imprint of his being, and who sustains all things by his mighty word. When he had accomplished purification from sins, he took his seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high, as far superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

For to which of the angels did God ever say: You are my son; this day I have begotten you? Or again: I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me? And again, when he leads the firstborn into the world, he says: Let all the angels of God worship him.

Priest/Lector: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

R./ Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Priest/Lector: A holy day has dawned upon us. Come, you nations, and adore the Lord. For today a great light has come upon the earth.

R./ Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

GOSPEL - 1:1-18 or [1:1-5, 9-14]

[In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. A man named John was sent from God. He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came to be through him, but the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, but his own people did not accept him.]

[But to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to those who believe in his name, who were born not by natural generation nor by human choice nor by a man's decision but of God. And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.] John testified to him and cried out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'The one who is coming after me ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.'" From his fullness we have all received, grace in place of grace, because while the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. The only Son, God, who is at the Father's side, has revealed him. This is the gospel of the Lord.

R/: Praise be to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

OFFERTORY HYMN - *"Oh Holy Night"*

COMMUNION HYMNS - *"It Came Upon A Midnight Clear"* & if time permits: *"Hark, the Herald Angels Sing"*

RECESSIONAL HYMN - *"Joy to the World"*

St. Francis Weekly "Faith Renewed"

LUKE 2:8-14

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were so afraid. And the angel said unto them, "Fear not; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger" And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying; "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

BREAD FOR THE JOURNEY...Henri Nouwen HOLDING ON TO THE CHRIST

Life is unpredictable. We can be happy one day and sad the next, healthy one day and sick the next, rich one day and poor the next, alive one day and dead the next. So who is there to hold on to? Who is there to feel secure with? Who is there to trust at all times?

Only Jesus, the Christ. He is our Lord, our shepherd, our rock, our stronghold, our refuge, our brother, our guide, and our friend. He came from God to be with us. He died for us, he was raised from the dead to open for us the way to God, and he is seated at God's right hand to welcome us home. with Paul, we must be certain that "neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nothing already in existence and nothing still to come, nor any power, nor the heights nor the depths, nor any created thing whatever, will be able to come between us and the love of God, known to us in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39).

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 the night to come to adore Him. All were filled with great joy over the mystery of the Incarnation. And a great tradition was begun.

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

THE BEAUTY OF CHRISTMAS, "KEEP THE MESSAGE!"

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 the 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. FRANCIS NOTES ..

"May your Christmas be a joyous celebration of praise for our glorious Savior and King."

A Merry and Blessed Christmas to All! Share with us in the breaking of the Christmas wafer (Oplatek), sometimes referred to as the "angel bread." This traditional Polish and seemingly ever popular growing tradition, is shared with all, friends and family in an exchange of good wishes with all present as a sign of love, forgiveness and reconciliation!

A hearty, sincere **THANK YOU** to: Fr. Andrew, John Hanft, Monika and the boys for our Church holiday decorations and all else they do; to Joni for printing and composing the bulletin; to our financial wizards Cheryl & Ann; AND to all who have selflessly given to St. Francis PNCC or to someone in need over this entire 2019 calendar year!

God Bless us and those we hold dear!

Merry, Blessed Christmas to all!

