

THE FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS  
SATURDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2024  
10:00AM

## Feast of the Holy Innocents



### Opening Hymn: CPWI # 665 *Once in royal David's city*

Once in royal David's city  
stood a lowly cattle shed,  
where a mother laid her baby  
in a manger for his bed:  
Mary was that Mother mild,  
Jesus Christ her little Child.

He came down to earth from heaven  
who is God and Lord of all,  
and his shelter was a stable,  
and his cradle was a stall;  
with the poor and mean and lowly  
lived on earth our Saviour holy.

And through all his wondrous childhood

he would honour and obey,  
love and watch the lowly Maiden,  
in whose gentle arms he lay:  
Christian children all must be  
mild, obedient, good as he.

For he is our childhood's pattern,  
day by day like us he grew,  
he was little, weak, and helpless,  
tears and smiles like us he knew;  
and he feeleth for our sadness,  
and he shareth in our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see him,  
through his own redeeming love,

for that Child so dear and gentle  
is our Lord in heaven above;  
and he leads his children on  
to the place where he is gone.

with the oxen standing by,  
we shall see him; but in heaven,  
set at God's right hand on high;  
where like stars his children crowned  
all in white shall wait around.

Not in that poor lowly stable,

OPENING SENTENCES

BCP, 33

**We remember today, O God, the slaughter of the holy innocents of Bethlehem by King Herod. Receive, we pray, into the arms of your mercy all innocent victims; and by your great might frustrate the designs of evil tyrants and establish your rule of justice, love, and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen**

**THE ACT OF PENITENCE:**

The sun of righteousness has dawned with healing in his wings. Let us come to the light of Christ, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION:**

God our Father, you sent you Son full of grace and truth: forgive our failure to receive him. Lord, have mercy.

**ALL: Lord, have mercy upon us.**

Jesus our Saviour, you were born in poverty and laid in a manger: forgive our greed and rejection of your ways. Christ, have mercy.

**ALL: Christ, have mercy upon us.**

Spirit of Love, your servant Mary responded joyfully to your call: forgive the hardness of our Hearts. Lord, have mercy.

**ALL: Lord, have mercy upon us.**

Absolution

BCP, 38

**Minister and people, kneeling, together say: Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; in your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things done and left undone; and so uphold us by your Spirit that we may live and serve you in newness of life, to the honour and glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

Almighty God have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Psalm: 124**

BCP, 642

1. If the LORD had not been on our side, \* let Israel now say;
2. If the LORD had not been on our side, \* when enemies rose up against us; **R**
3. Then would they have swallowed us up alive \* in their fierce anger toward us;
4. Then would the waters have overwhelmed us \* and the torrent gone over us; **R**

5. Then would the raging waters \* have gone right over us.
6. Blessed be the LORD! \* he has not given us over to be a prey for their teeth. *R*
7. We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowler; \* the snare is broken, and we have escaped.
8. Our help is in the Name of the LORD, \* the maker of heaven and earth. *R*

*Refrain: Our help is in the name of the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.*

## LESSON: REVELATION 21:1-7

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children.

## Hymn: O Lord, the Holy Innocents

Lord, the Holy Innocents  
Laid down for thee their infant life  
And martyrs brave and patient saints  
Have stood for thee in fire and strife

We wear the cross they wear of old  
Our lips have learnt their vows to make  
We need not die, we cannot fight  
What may we do for Jesus' sake?

O day by day each Christian child  
Has much to do, without, within  
A death to die for Jesus' sake  
A weary war to rage with sin

When deep within our swelling hearts  
The thoughts of pride and anger rise  
When bitter words are on our tongues

And tears of passion in our eyes

Then may we stay the angry blow  
Then may we check the hasty word  
Give gentle answers back again  
And fight a battle for our Lord

With smiles of peace and looks of love  
Light in our dwellings we may make  
Bid kind good humour brighten there  
And do all still for Jesus' sake

There's not a child so weak and small  
But has his little cross to take  
His little work of love and praise  
That he may do for Jesus' sake

## LESSON: MATTHEW 2:13-18

13 Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.' <sup>14</sup>Then Joseph\* got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, <sup>15</sup>and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, 'Out of Egypt I have called my son.' <sup>16</sup>When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men,\* he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men.\* <sup>17</sup>Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: <sup>18</sup>'A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.'

## REFLECTION

### THE CREED

I believe in God, The Father Almighty, He made everything I see and don't see. Everything I see, the earth, the sky, the sea, are God's gifts to me.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son our Lord. He was God's greatest gift to me. He came to earth to be my friend and my brother. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary gave birth to him. He was born long long ago in Bethlehem and Mary was his mother. It is him we celebrate at Christmas time. He suffered, died and was buried. He descended to the dead and He rose again on the third day.

I believe in the Holy Spirit who gives life to me and to all the friends of Jesus who are the Church. I believe that God forgives my sins, that in God there is new life and that God gives me hope of life forever with Him and the Saints. Amen

### The Prayers

Let us pray to God: The Father our Creator, Jesus our Saviour, the Holy Spirit our Helper.

Christ, born in a stable, give courage to all who are homeless. Jesus, Saviour, **hear our prayer.**

Christ, for whom the angels sang, give the song of the kingdom to all who weep. Jesus, Saviour, **hear our prayer.**

Christ, worshipped by the shepherds, give peace on earth to all who are oppressed. Jesus, Saviour, **hear our prayer.**

Christ, before whom the wise men knelt, give humility and wisdom to all who govern. Jesus, Saviour, **hear our prayer.**

Christ, whose radiance filled a lowly manger, give the glory of your resurrection to all who rest in you. Jesus, Saviour, **hear our prayer.**

Before Christ we offer our thanksgiving, we pray for our needs and the needs of others

**All: Jesus, Saviour, child of Mary, you know us and love us, you share our lives and hear our prayers. Glory to you forever. Amen.**

### **The Collects**

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**The Holy Innocents:** We remember today, O God, the slaughter of the holy innocents of Bethlehem by King Herod. Receive, we pray, into the arms of your mercy all innocent victims; and by your great might frustrate the designs of evil tyrants and establish your rule of justice, love, and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**The Nativity of our Lord: Christmas Day:** Eternal God, this holy night is radiant with the brilliance of your true light. As we have known the revelation of that light on earth, bring us to see the splendour of your heavenly glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the rest of the past night, and for the gift of a new day, with its opportunities of pleasing you. Grant that we may so pass its hours in the perfect freedom of your service, that at evening we may again give you thanks; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **The Hymn for the Offering: CPWI # 642 *Away in a manger, no crib for a bed***

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;  
the stars in the bright sky looked down where  
he lay,  
the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,  
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes;

I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the  
sky,  
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay  
dost by me for ever, and love me, I pray;  
bless all the dear children in thy tender care,  
and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

### **Blessing of Children and the Gifts - Coventry Carol**

What child is this (O&N, 729)

Cum Dun (CPWI, 76)

Hark the Herald Angels Sing (CPWI, 68)

O little town of Bethlehem (CPWI, 82)

See Him lying on a bed of straw (CPWI, 84)

The Lord's Prayer & Final Benediction

### **The Closing Hymn: CPWI #63 *The Virgin Mary had a baby boy***

*The Virgin Mary had a baby boy,  
the Virgin Mary had a baby boy,*

*the Virgin Mary had a baby boy,  
and they said that his name was Jesus.*

**Refrain:**

*He come from the glory,  
he come from the glorious kingdom.  
He come from the glory,  
he come from the glorious kingdom.  
Oh yes, believe1; oh yes, believer.  
He come from the glory,  
he come from the glorious kingdom.*

*The angels sang when the babe was born,*

*the angels sang when the babe was born,  
the angels sang when the babe was born,  
and proclaimed him the Saviour Jesus.*

**Refrain**

*The wise men saw where the babe was born,  
the wise men saw where the babe was born,  
the wise men saw where the babe was born,  
and they saw that his name was Jesus.*

**Refrain**