



St Andrew's Parish News

We are a Dynamic Faith Community in the Spirit of the Gospel

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT - YEAR A - 20 & 21 DECEMBER 2025

OUR PARISH

Parish Office

76 Springs Road
Clayton South VIC 3169
Phone: 9551 5666
Email: claytonsouth@cam.org.au
Tuesday - Friday 10am - 3pm

Mass Times

Saturday: Vigil 6.00pm
Sunday: 8.00am, 9.30am, 11.00am
Mon - Sat (except Tues): 9.15am
Tues: 7.00pm & Novena to St. Jude

Reconciliation

Saturday: 9.45 to 10.15am

Baptism & Wedding

Please contact the Parish Office

Funeral

Please contact the Parish Office



PARISH TEAM

Parish Priest

Fr. Shibu Joseph sac
shibu.joseph@cam.org.au

Parish Team Leader

Linda De Souza (Tues/ Thurs/Fri)
Email: claytonsouth@cam.org.au

Parish Secretary

Smita Pinto (Tue/Wed)
Luisa May - Bookkeeper (Thu)

Youth Co-ordinator

SAYGCS21@gmail.com

St. Andrew's Primary School

Principal: Brian Martin
Phone: 9551 5094
principal@saclaytonsth.catholic.edu.au

School R.E. Co-ordinator

Emma Strom

ONLINE SERVICES

Website:

www.standrewsclaytonsouth.org.au

Daily Reflections:

<https://catholic-daily-reflections.com/>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/standrewsparishclaytonsouth

HAPPY CHRISTMAS

Wednesday 24 December	06.30pm	Carols
	07.00pm	Children and Family Mass with Nativity Play
	11.30pm	Carols followed by Midnight Mass
Thursday 25 December Christmas Day	08.00am	Carols
	08.30am	Christmas Mass
	10.00am	Carols
	10.30am	Christmas Mass

St. Andrew's Parish, Clayton South is committed to the safety, wellbeing & dignity of all children, young people & vulnerable adults.

PARISH NEWS

Happy Birthday to
 Joanna De Souza, Eilean Nadal, Noel Nigli,
 Martin Nellivila, Paul Nattar,
 Juan Peters, Immaculate,
Have a nice day!

ST. ANDREW'S PARISH
2026 NEW YEARS EVE DANCE
 31 DECEMBER 2025, 7:30 PM - 12:30 AM

RAFFLE TICKETS ON SALE
 EXCITING PRIZES TO BE WON !!

1ST PRIZE \$250
 2ND PRIZE \$150
 3RD PRIZE \$100

& many more prizes!!

Don't miss this opportunity to take home a prize.



Christmas Giving Tree!

Members of the St Vincent de Paul Society are supporting families in need with food assistance this Christmas, and special hampers will also be provided to some of our school students. With the rising cost of living affecting many families, the Christmas Giving Tree has been placed in the narthex. Please contribute using the blue box next to the tree or via the QR code provided. All donations go directly to supporting people in need in our community. Every gift, no matter how small, is appreciated. <https://fundraising.svdp-vic.org.au/claytonsouthconference> Vincentians of St. Andrews Conference and our companions from the society, wishing all of you a Merry Christmas!

New Year Dance Raffle Tickets will continue to be on sale at all weekend Masses. We also invite volunteers to help with setting up the hall on **Monday, 29 December at 10:00 am**, in preparation for the dance. Your help would be greatly appreciated. Thank you. (Janet D'Mello)

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR ROSTERS

	CHRISTMAS EVE		CHRISTMAS DAY		NEW YEAR EVE	NEW YEAR DAY
	Wed 24.12.25 07.00pm	Wed 24.12.25 11.30pm	Thurs 25.12.25 8.30am	Thurs 25.12.25 10.30am	Wed 31.12.25 5.00pm Adoration 6.00pm Mass	Thurs 01.01.26 10.00am
ALTAR SERVERS	Ryan G Gavin	Sophia Chanelle Alexia, Esther, Rachel		Alexia Eva		Sophia
COMMENTATOR	Janet D	Angela H	Oka G	Maria B	Jenny Conyers	Edwin B
READERS	Cheryl L Kim D	David G Gabrielle N	Felecia F Patricia C	Colette D Betty C	Cora D David G	Betty C Janet D
SPECIAL MINISTERS	Corazon J Xavier F Marguerita S Marcelle J	Cheryl R Michael M Oreen T Marilyne W	George V Riekie V Marlene E	Betty C Rodolfo G Ean B Beata G	Oreen T Cora Jenny	Felecia F Cheryl R Ean B Pearl B
WELCOMERS	Anna W	Linda M.	Rieki V	Treasure	Peter F	Treasure
COLLECTION	Rodney P	Peter F	Peter F	Peter F	Peter F	Peter F



CHILDREN MUST HAVE ADULT SUPERVISION AT ALL TIMES



WEEKLY CALENDAR 15 DEC 2025

Monday 22 December

09.15am Mass
07.00pm Choir Practice (11am Choir)

Tuesday 23 December

07.00pm Mass / Novena to St Jude

Wednesday 24 December - CHRISTMAS EVE

06.30pm Carols
07.00pm Christmas Family Mass
11.30pm Carols
12.00am Christmas Midnight Mass

Thursday 25 December - CHRISTMAS DAY

08.00am Carols
08.30am Christmas Mass
10.00pm Carols
10.30pm Christmas Mass

Friday 26 December

09.15am Mass

Saturday 27 December

09.15am Mass
10.30am Choir Practice (9.30am Choir)
06.00pm Mass
08.00pm Good Shepherd Servant Comm - P & W

Sunday 28 December - The HOLY FAMILY

08.00am Mass
09.30am Mass
11.00am Mass

REMEMBERING OUR COMMUNITY

Pray For Healing: Candice Walker, Alexander, Felipe & Anne, Dom Carlos Ximenes Belo, Oemo Jong, Eugene Roberts, Alyson, Uttam Sharma, Alex D'Cruz, Julie Kanta.

Recently Deceased: Mani Peiris, Vilma Forbs.

Birthday Remembrance: Jessy Fabien, Tristan Valayoodum, Philip Geer.

Death Anniversaries: Maria Khiem, Dominic Tien, Maud Highland, Fiona and Fredric Luchow, Adrian Fraser, Rose Barwell, Lucyna, Zdzislaw Bielinski, Rosy Ouseph, Angela Fernandez, Georgina Geer, Jose PE, George PE, Martin Mathew, Joyce Hookins, Carmina Buenavista, Violeta Capacete, Abelardo Capacete, Varghese ML, Lonappan M, Augustine Varikakal, Souls of Geer and Fernandez families, All Forgotten & Souls in Purgatory.

ROSTERS

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT - YEAR A

20 & 21 DEC 2025	MASS TIMES			
	Saturday	Sunday		
	6.00pm	8.00am	9.30am	11.00am
Altar Servers				
Comm	Jenny C	Santhosh	Terry M	Maria B
Readers	Cheryl L Cheryl R	Marcelle J Neddie A	Angela H Oka G	Beatriz C Rada
Special Ministers	Michael Xavier F Cora D Julianne	George Riekie Rebecca G Marguerita	Angela H Rodolfo G Jan Van R Linda M	Ean B Rodney N Rada P Erlinda D
Welcomers	Xavier F	Santosh S	Laurence B	Claire R
Altar L.	Winnie Miranda			
Counters Team	Marian J, Maureen H, Eugene G, Peter F, Basil H, Glenda L, Laurence Bernard, Pearl Braganza			

THE HOLY FAMILY - YEAR A

27 & 28 DEC 2025	MASS TIMES			
	Saturday	Sunday		
	6.00pm	8.00am	9.30am	11.00am
Altar Servers				
Comm	Edwin B	Philippe D	Oka G	Beatriz C
Readers	Esther T Lota F	Patricia C Volunteer	Jan Van R Angela Ho	Maria B Volunteer
Special Ministers	Cheryl R Anne L F Pearl B Jenny C	Marguerita Marlene E Marcelle J Volunteer	Hanna T Linda M Rodolfo G Angela Ho	Beata G Pat I Linda K Rodney N
Welcomers	Pearl B	Riekie V	Laurence B	Peter F
Altar L.	Claudette Chung			
Counters Team	Marian J, Maureen H, Eugene G, Peter F, Basil H, Glenda L, Laurence Bernard, Pearl Braganza			

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

St. Andrew's Parish is committed to the safety, wellbeing & dignity of all children, young people & vulnerable adults.

Parish Office Christmas Break: Please note that the Parish Office will be closed for the Christmas break from **24 December to 12 January**, both dates inclusive. Normal office hours will resume on **13 Jan 2026**.



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**A WELL WISHER FOR THE PARISH
 OF ST. ANDREW'S**

From the depths of my nothing-
 ness I prostrate myself before
 you O most Sacred Divine Ador-
 able Heart of Jesus to pay to
 you all the homage of love praise
 and adoration in my power.
 Amen

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**THE 04TH SUNDAY
OF ADVENT - YR A
21ST DECEMBER 2025**



FIRST READING Isaiah 7:10-14

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The Lord spoke to Ahaz and said, 'Ask the Lord your God for a sign for yourself coming either from the depths of Sheol or from the heights above.' 'No', Ahaz answered 'I will not put the Lord to the test.' Then Isaiah said:

'Listen now, House of David:
are you not satisfied with trying the patience
of men without trying the patience of my God,
too? The Lord himself, therefore,
will give you a sign.
It is this: the maiden is with child
and will soon give birth to a son
whom she will call Immanuel,
a name which means "God-is-with-us".'

RESP PSALM Ps 23:1-6.

(R.) Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

1. The Lord's is the earth and its fullness,
the world and all its peoples.
It is he who set it on the seas;
on the waters he made it firm. (R.)
2. Who shall climb the mountain of the Lord?
Who shall stand in his holy place?
The man with clean hands and pure heart,
who desires not worthless things. (R.)
3. He shall receive blessings from the Lord
and reward from the God who saves him.
Such are the men who seek him,
seek the face of the God of Jacob. (R.)

SECOND READING Romans 1:1-7

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

From Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus who has been called to be an apostle, and specially chosen to preach the Good News that God promised long ago through his prophets in the scriptures.

This news is about the Son of God, who, according to the human nature he took, was a descendant of

David: it is about Jesus Christ our Lord who, in the order of the spirit, the spirit of holiness that was in him, was proclaimed Son of God in all his power through his resurrection from the dead. Through him we received grace and our apostolic mission to preach the obedience of faith to all pagan nations in honour of his name. You are one of these nations, and by his call belong to Jesus Christ. To you all, then, who are God's beloved in Rome, called to be saints, may God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send grace and peace.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION MATT 1:23

Alleluia, alleluia!

A virgin will give birth to a son;
his name will be Emmanuel: God is with us.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL Matthew 1:18-24

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son
and they will call him Emmanuel,

a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do: he took his wife to his home.

SUNDAY REFLECTION

Just Man Dreaming: Joseph could not ignore Mary's pregnancy, but he had an exceptional large-heartedness, so that he preserved a future for Mary even though she had apparently wronged him.

If he had gone to sleep in a frame of mind to avenge his honour, he would not have been ready to have the deepest levels of his consciousness stirred in the way God wanted. In the deep sleep of a just and good man, Joseph was enlightened as to the divine dimension of Mary's pregnancy. The old cycle of human history, literally generation after generation, was being broken. Something utterly new had happened.

You and I are just as likely to receive an intuition as to God's plan for us in the depths of sleep: who we really are, who we are destined to be, where we fit in to God's plan for transforming the whole of creation. When we get these instructive moments in our sleep, what can we do when we wake up? We can do what Joseph did: get up and do what is needed to fulfil the message.

We could pause for a moment to thank Joseph for showing what dreams can be made of. Tonight might be the night!

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PIETY STALL AT ST ANDREW'S



Come visit our Parish Piety Stall after Mass and explore our new arrivals! It includes beautiful religious items, rosaries, medals, prayer cards, Bibles, and gifts for all occasions. We have a lovely selection perfect for First Holy Communion, Confirmation, Baptisms, or simply to enrich your personal prayer life. Your purchase

DONATION FOR CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

We kindly welcome any donations towards our wonderful Christmas and New Year celebrations. Contributions can be made either in cash through the Parish Office or via bank transfer to the church account. To help us issue a receipt promptly, please send us an email notifying us of your donation. Thank you for your generosity.

ACCOUNT NAME: ST. ANDREW'S PARISH

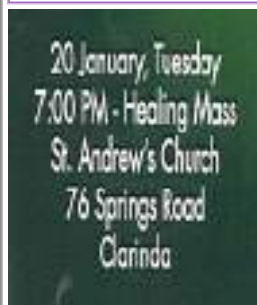
BSB: 083 347

A/C NO: 662557799

Reference: CHRISTMAS & Your Name

ENROL NOW! SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM 2026

It's time to enrol for St. Andrew's Parish Religious Education Program 2026. This program is designed for children who will be receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation in 2025. Classes are held on Tuesdays during school terms from 4:00pm to 5:00pm and are intended for children who do not attend a Catholic school. The program provides both general religious education and specific preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation in Year 3, First Eucharist in Year 4, and Confirmation in Year 6. These are the minimum age requirements for each Sacrament; however, older children who need to prepare are most welcome to join. For more details or to enrol, please contact the Parish Office on 03 9551 5666 or email claytonsouth@cam.org.au.



FEASTS & SAINTS OF THE WEEK

St. Stephen - 26th December



St. Stephen, the first martyr of the Church, reminds us of the cost and courage of true discipleship. Chosen as one of the first deacons, he served the community with faith, wisdom, and compassion. Filled with the Holy Spirit, Stephen boldly proclaimed Christ even in the face of fierce opposition. As he was being stoned, he forgave his persecutors and entrusted his life to God, echoing the words of Jesus on the cross. His martyrdom shows that love is stronger than hatred and faith stronger than fear. On this feast, we pray for the grace to live and witness to our faith with the same courage and forgiveness.

GIVING via QR CODE



FINANCE

To financially support our parish, you can make a donation by scanning this QR code which is unique to St. Andrew's Church, Clayton South. It will give you direct access to the CDF pay webpage by following a few easy steps. The QR code is also displayed in the Church foyer. Thank you.

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CHRISTMAS PROGRAM 2025

DAY	TIME	PROGRAM
Saturday 06 December Carols by Candlelight	06.30 - 09.30pm	Carols by Candlelight School Hall
Wednesday 10 December	09.15am	Anointing within Mass
Monday 15 December	07.00pm	Advent Retreat - Day 1 Fr. Joby George VC <i>Mass, Talk and Adoration</i>
Tuesday 16 December	07.00pm	Advent Retreat - Day 2 Fr. Joby George VC <i>Mass, Talk, Confession and Adoration</i>
Wednesday 24 December	06.30pm 07.00pm 11.30pm	Carols Children's & Family Mass With Nativity Play Carols Followed by Midnight Mass
Thursday 25th December Christmas day	08.00am 08.30am 10.00am 10.30am	Carols Christmas Mass Carols Christmas Mass
NEW YEAR 2026		
New Year Eve Wednesday 31 December	05.00pm 06.00 pm	Eucharistic Adoration Thanksgiving/Mary Mother of God
Thursday 1st January 2026	10.00am	Mary, Mother of God



CHRISTMAS EVE
7.00PM
24 DEC 2025



FIRST READING Isaiah 62: 1-5

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

About Zion I will not be silent, about Jerusalem I will not grow weary, until her integrity shines out like the dawn and her salvation flames like a torch. The nations then will see your integrity, all the kings your glory, and you will be called by a new name, one which the mouth of the Lord will confer. You are to be a crown of splendour in the hand of the Lord, a princely diadem in the hand of your God; no longer are you to be named 'Forsaken', nor your land 'Abandoned', but you shall be called 'My Delight' and your land 'The Wedded'; for the Lord takes delight in you and your land will have its wedding. Like a young man marrying a virgin, so will the one who built you wed you, and as the bridegroom rejoices in his bride, so will your God rejoice in you.

RESP PSALM Ps 88

(R.) Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord

1. 'I have made a covenant with my chosen one;
I have sworn to David my servant:
I will establish your dynasty for ever
and set up your throne through all ages.' (R.)
2. Happy the people who acclaim such a king,
who walk, O Lord, in the light of your face,
who find their joy every day in your name,
who make your justice the source of their bliss. (R.)
3. 'He will say to me: "You are my father,
my God, the rock who saves me."
I will keep my love for him always;
for him my covenant shall endure.' (R.)

SECOND READING Acts 13:16 -25

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

When Paul reached Antioch in Pisidia, he stood up in the synagogue, held up a hand for silence and began to speak:

'Men of Israel, and fearers of God, listen! The God of our nation Israel chose our ancestors, and made our people great when they were living as foreigners in Egypt; then by divine power he led them out. 'Then he made David their king, of whom he approved in these words, "I have selected David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart, who will carry out my whole purpose". To keep his

promise, God has raised up for Israel one of David's descendants, Jesus, as Saviour, whose coming was heralded by John when he proclaimed a baptism of repentance for the whole people of Israel. Before John ended his career he said, "I am not the one you imagine me to be; that one is coming after me and I am not fit to undo his sandal".'

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION LK 2:10-11

Alleluia, alleluia!

I bring you news of great joy;
Today a Saviour has been born to us,
Christ the Lord,
Alleluia!



GOSPEL MT 1:18-25

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

The Virgin will conceive and give birth to a son
and they will call him Emmanuel, a name which means
'God-is-with-us'.

When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord told him to do: he took his wife to his home and, though he had not had intercourse with her, she gave birth to a son; and he named him Jesus.



**CHRISTMAS
MIDNIGHT MASS
25 DEC 2025**



FIRST READING Isaiah 9: 1-7

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The people that walked in darkness has seen a great light; on those who live in a land of deep shadow a light has shone. You have made their gladness greater, you have made their joy increase; they rejoice in your presence as men rejoice at harvest time, as men are happy when they are dividing the spoils. For the yoke that was weighing on him, the bar across his shoulders, the rod of his oppressor, these you break as on the day of Midian. For all the footgear of battle, every cloak rolled in blood, is burnt, and consumed by fire.

For there is a child born for us, a son given to us and dominion is laid on his shoulders; and this is the name they give him: Wonder-Counsellor, Mighty-God, Eternal-Father, Prince-of-Peace. Wide is his dominion in a peace that has no end, for the throne of David and for his royal power, which he establishes and makes secure in justice and integrity. From this time onwards and for ever, the jealous love of the Lord of Hosts will do this.

RESP PSALM Ps 95

(R.) Today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord.

1. O sing a new song to the Lord,
sing to the Lord all the earth.
O sing to the Lord, bless his name. (R.)
2. Proclaim his help day by day,
tell among the nations his glory
and his wonders among all the peoples. (R.)
3. Let the heavens rejoice and earth be glad,
let the sea and all within it thunder praise,
let the land and all it bears rejoice,
all the trees of the wood shout for joy
at the presence of the Lord for he comes,
he comes to rule the earth. (R.)
4. With justice he will rule the world,
he will judge the peoples with his truth. (R.)

SECOND READING TITUS 2:11-14

A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to Titus

God's grace has been revealed, and it has made salvation possible for the whole human race and taught us that what we have to do is to give up everything that does not lead to God, and all our worldly ambitions; we must be self-restrained and live good and religious lives here in this

present world, while we are waiting in hope for the blessing which will come with the Appearing of the glory of our great God and saviour Christ Jesus. He sacrificed himself for us in order to set us free from all wickedness and to purify a people so that it could be his very own and would have no ambition except to do good.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION LK 2:10-11

Alleluia, alleluia!

Good News and great joy to all the world:
today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord.

Alleluia!



GOSPEL Lk 2 1-14

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

Caesar Augustus issued a decree for a census of the whole world to be taken. This census – the first – took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria, and everyone went to his own town to be registered. So Joseph set out from the town of Nazareth in Galilee and travelled up to Judaea, to the town of David called Bethlehem, since he was of David's House and line, in order to be registered together with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to a son, her first-born. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them at the inn.

In the countryside close by there were shepherds who lived in the fields and took it in turns to watch their flocks during the night. The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone round them. They were terrified, but the angel said, 'Do not be afraid. Listen, I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people. Today in the town of David a saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. And here is a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.' And suddenly with the angel there was a great throng of the heavenly host, praising God and singing:

'Glory to God in the highest heaven
and peace to men who enjoy his favour.'



CHRISTMAS DAY
8.30 & 10.30AM
25 DEC 2025



FIRST READING Isaiah 52:7-10

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

How beautiful on the mountains, are the feet of one who brings good news, who heralds peace, brings happiness, proclaims salvation, and tells Zion, 'Your God is king!' Listen! Your watchmen raise their voices, they shout for joy together, for they see the Lord face to face, as he returns to Zion. Break into shouts of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the Lord is consoling his people, redeeming Jerusalem. The Lord bares his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

RESP PSALM Ps 97:1-6.

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

1. Sing a new song to the Lord for he has worked wonders. His right hand and his holy arm have brought salvation. (R.)
2. The Lord has made known his salvation; has shown his justice to the nations. He has remembered his truth and love for the house of Israel. (R.)
3. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Shout to the Lord all the earth, ring out your joy. (R.)
4. Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp, with the sound of music. With trumpets and the sound of the horn acclaim the King, the Lord. (R.)

SECOND READING Heb 1:1-6

A reading from the Letter of Hebrews

At various times in the past and in various different ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; but in our own time, the last days, he has spoken to us through his Son, the Son that he has appointed to inherit everything and through whom he made everything there is. He is the radiant light of God's glory and the perfect copy of his nature, sustaining the universe by his powerful command; and now that he has destroyed the defilement of sin, he has gone to take his place in heaven at the right hand of divine Majesty. So he is now as far above the angels as the title which he has inherited is higher than their own name.

God has never said to any angel: You are my Son, today I have become your father, or: I will be a father to him and he a son to me. Again, when he brings the First-born into the world, he says: Let all the angels of God worship him.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

A holy day has dawned upon us.

Come you nations and adore the Lord.

Today a great light has come upon the earth.

Alleluia!



GOSPEL Lk 2: 1-14

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

Caesar Augustus issued a decree for a census of the whole world to be taken. This census – the first – took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria, and everyone went to his own town to be registered. So Joseph set out from the town of Nazareth in Galilee and travelled up to Judaea, to the town of David called Bethlehem, since he was of David's House and line, in order to be registered together with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to a son, her first-born. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them at the inn.

In the countryside close by there were shepherds who lived in the fields and took it in turns to watch their flocks during the night. The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone round them. They were terrified, but the angel said, 'Do not be afraid. Listen, I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people. Today in the town of David a saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. And here is a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.' And suddenly with the angel there was a great throng of the heavenly host, praising God and singing: 'Glory to God in the highest heaven and peace to men who enjoy his favour.'

