



## SUNDAY TABLE SERVICE

31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 Epiphany

**Let us watch Songs of Praise together  
on the ABC and then set the table  
for our shared meal.**



- **Setting our table for our Sunday lunch service.**

As certain as the dawn follows the night, so is the promise of God's forgiveness and love for us all. Arise and Shine. Follow the star. Find the light of the world born in Bethlehem and be transformed from darkness into light. **Amen.**

Let us prepare our tables with thanksgiving and prayer adding those special gifts or items to remind us of God's precious gift to human kind.



If you are celebrating this meal alone please be aware that **God Is With You.**

Has anyone promised you something in the long term. Later you wonder if that promise will ever come to pass. Mary and Joseph were given promises about Jesus before his birth. After the birth, the shepherds, and later the visit from the kings everything seems to go very wrong. Young toddlers are slaughtered in Bethlehem and the holy family escape as refugees into Egypt. Eventually they made it back to Nazareth. When Jesus was eight he was brought to the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. There, a very prominent Rabbi and an elderly prophetess prophecy that this boy Jesus would not only be the deliverance of the Jews but bring redemption for every nation. In the midst of hardship God affirmed His promise. The bible is full of his promises to us.



**opening prayer —**

**consciously drawing together in our mind our Parish community around our table.**

*Be still and silent. Visualise in your mind, those whom you invited to share with you. Pray:*

***In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.***

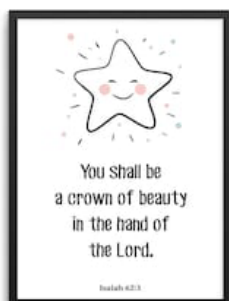
***Here, and throughout the world, We adore you O Christ, and we bless you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world. Amen***

***Bless this food, both physical and spiritual. Bless all who gather at your table, both seen and unseen, In Jesus' name we pray. Amen***

- **Let us read and reflect on our cycle of readings**

A reading from the prophet Isaiah Chapter 61 v 10 to 62 v 3

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations. For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will give. You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of



the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. Hear the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 148 — A.P.B.A. Page 378

1 Praise the Lord praise the Lord from heaven:

O praise him in the heights.

2 Praise him all his angels:

O praise him all his host.

3 Praise him sun and moon:

praise him all you stars of light.

4 Praise him you highest heaven:

and you waters that are above the heavens.

5 Let them praise the name of the Lord:

for he commanded and they were made.

6 He established them forever and ever:

he made an ordinance which shall not pass away.

7 O praise the Lord from the earth:

praise him you sea-monsters and all deeps;

8 Fire and hail, mist and snow:

and storm-wind fulfilling his command;

9 Mountains and all hills: fruit trees and all cedars;

10 Beasts of the wild and all cattle:

creeping things and winged birds;

11 Kings of the earth and all peoples:

princes and all rulers of the world;

12 Young men and maidens:

old folk and children together.

13 Let them praise the name of the Lord:

for his name alone is exalted.

14 His glory is above earth and heaven:

and he has lifted high the horn of his people.

15 Therefore he is the praise of all his servants:

of the children of Israel a people that is near him. Praise the Lord.



A reading from the letter to the Galatians Chapter 4 v 4-7



THE  
*Spirit*  
OF  
*Adoption*  
GALATIANS 4:4-7

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God. Hear the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke Chapter 2 v 22-40

**Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, the parents of Jesus brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed — and a sword will pierce your own soul too." There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.



The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

### **Sentence**

My eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel. Luke 2.30-32

*Let us now engage in some quiet reflection, or conversation and sharing, responding to the Gospel passage. We may like to write down some key thoughts for further reflection.*

**The child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him.**

**Because you are His children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts.**

Sometimes because of pain and difficulty we seem so far removed from what God has for us or even God Himself. Yet, God promises that we belong to Him, so much so, He makes us His heirs. Heirs to receive all His spiritual wealth in the present. Like Mary and Joseph we too need spiritual confirmation. Encouragement that God keeps His word. God knows we are humans



who struggling with uncertainty, shifting circumstances, and doubt. A spiritual life is definitely a life trusting in the unseen and uncontrollable to bring about the reality of transformation in our souls. Trusting that God will be with us even in our saddest, loneliness and deepest pain. Trusting that as we continue to walk with Him, He will remind us in unexpected ways that his is right there with us.

**prayer-time** Now let us continue to offer our prayers and thanksgiving. We pray for healing of the world; We pray for all those who continue to be affected by violence and conflict around the world especially in Israel and Gaza and Ukraine. We pray that all parties will work towards an end of the conflict and move to find peaceful solutions,

🙏 God of peace, be with all those who live in fear and danger. Heal those wounded by hate and conflict. Teach us to love our enemies and live together with understanding and compassion. Amen.

We pray for family; for members of the parish and wider community, for the life and ministry of the Church, for encouragement in our journey of faith.

We continue to pray alongside those in our parish asking for prayer, Jean N Brendas family as they grieve, Colin, Allison, Pat Foord, , Georgia (Sunaras Mum). Pat V David, Brenda, Joanie, Jo Jan, Joy I, Leanne, Daniella, Joyce and Ted, Mary R, Jac Bishop; Eileen Cook; Yvonne Scrutton; Catherine Cooling; Ursula Pridham; Trish McD; Barbara Webber; Tom Arnold; Nicholas & Ben; Sue & Frank Thomas; Gordon Russell; Emily and her family; Trish Simon; Christina and any others we wish to remember, either silently or aloud.

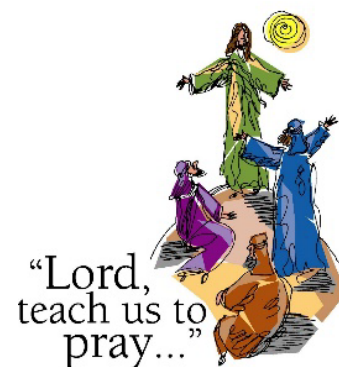


**Let us say the Lord's Prayer Together.**

**Our Father .....**

**Prayer of the Day**

Saving God,  
whose Son Jesus was presented in the temple  
and was acclaimed the glory of Israel  
and the light of the nations:  
grant that in him we may be presented to you  
and in the world may reflect his glory;  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen.



**Conclude the meal with the following prayer together.**



***May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
be amongst us and remain with us always. Amen.***

**• Intentional connection beyond your home**

After our Table Service, make contact with others who may be alone or missing seeing their families and loved ones during the Christmas Season. Use the time to catch up with your family and friends who are interstate or overseas. Use email or face time or SMS to keep in contact and share with others the Joy of Christmas and the promise of a brighter and better future in 2024

Let God guide you to the person or persons with whom you should connect. Contact them. Start a conversation: Share with them the Joy of Christmas. Emmanuel - God is with us.

