



**TABLE SERVICE**  
**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> December 2025**  
**First Sunday after Christmas**  
**Let us sit and watch Songs of Praise together**  
**on the ABC and then set the table for our Parish meal.**



**Prayerful and intentional preparation for a meal**

As we continue celebrating the birth of Jesus  
 and look forward to the promise of a New Year  
 let us always remember, that no matter where we are,  
 we are never alone.

**EMMANUEL: GOD IS WITH US.\**

The lectionary takes us to a challenging place this week. In the midst of the bright lights and joy of Christmas, we have the darkness and sorrow of the story of the 'Holy Innocents' and the account of the holy family fleeing as refugees. Both the joy of the season and the sorrow at the heart of the Gospel reading remind us that all lives are precious. We reflect on this in different ways and allow ourselves to be challenged to care for those in danger or sorrow.

***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.**

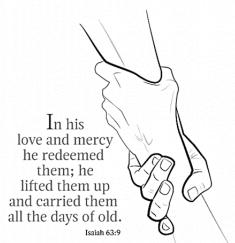
**Here, and throughout the world, We adore you O Christ, and we bless you,  
 because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world. Amen**

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

*A reading from the prophet Isaiah 63 7-9*

I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord, the praiseworthy acts of the Lord, because of all that the Lord has done for us, and the great favour to the house of Israel that he has shown them according to his mercy, according to the abundance of his steadfast love. For he said, "Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely"; and he became their saviour in all their distress. It was no messenger or angel but his presence that saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

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 for ever 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.

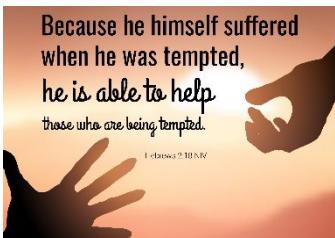
15 Therefore he is the praise of all his servants:

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



*A reading from the letter to the Hebrews 2 10-18*

It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, saying, "I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you." And again, "I will put my trust in him." And again, "Here am I and the children whom God has given me." Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the



one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of

atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

Hear the word of the Lord.      *Thanks be to God.*

*The Gospel according to Matthew 2 13-23   Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ*

After the wise men had left the house, 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." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, 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." 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. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: "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." When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judaea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He will be called a Nazorean." *The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.*



### **Sentence**

*Because Jesus himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested. Hebrews 2.10-18*

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

Christmas is for many a time of celebration with family and friends. A time of warmth, love and peace – and rightly so. But every Christmas season there are others who find this time of year difficult to cope with. Today's Gospel reading makes us mindful of such times, in particular, those who seek refuge and those who weep for their children.



Throughout Advent we were reminded that the child to be born would be called Immanuel – which means God is with us. Today we remember that Immanuel was a refugee. That God knows first-hand what it is to be homeless. And that God does care.

### **Prayer-time**

Compassionate God It is especially hard, so soon after the peace of Christmas, to read in Matthews Gospel of the brutal deaths of so many innocent children .an echo of all those children still suffering today. So let us take a moment to remember all children who have been and continue to be victims of the violence .

May the light of their precious lives never dim, their memory never fade and may the hearts of those who mourn be comforted. Amen.

We pray alongside those in our parish asking for prayer:- Cathy, Jo, Lorraine, Sue, Margaret P, Trish S Kay & Chris DeVries Lynn H, Jean T, Sue and family, Stephen, Anne, Ken, Neville B, Lisa W, Jan Y, Michael, Andrew, Colin C, Pratibha K, Jeanette B, Barbara A, Jo M, Sue Mc, Griselda, Patrusca, Lorraine, Rachel, Steve, Ebony, Nicole, David, Takoohi, Glenda, Margaret, Wendy, Gweneth, Jo and Ginne, Matthew, Ann, Kathryn and Keiran, Ruth, Jean N, Georgia, Pat V, Brenda, Joanie, Jan, Joy I, Jac B; Eileen, Ursula P, Nicholas & Ben; Sue & Frank G, Emily and her family; Christina and any others we wish to remember, either silently or aloud

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

**Our Father .....**

**The Collect**

Almighty God,  
who wonderfully created,  
and yet more wonderfully restored,  
the dignity of human nature:  
in your mercy, bring us to share the divine life of Jesus Christ,  
who came to share our human life,  
and who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen.



**Conclude the meal with the following prayer**



***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 spend some time reaching out to others. You can do this in prayer or by contacting them directly. Those who may be alone or missing seeing their families and loved ones during the Christmas Season. Let God guide you to the person or persons with whom you should connect. 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.

