



# Waterside Catholic Parish St Bernard's & St Michael's



**Parish Diary week commencing Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December 2023  
and week commencing 31st December 2023**

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**Rev. Ian Tobin, Parish Deacon:** [itobin@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:itobin@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

**Parish Office :** Parish admin team : Andrea Kehoe & Angela Slattery. H&S David Dethick. Maintenance: Wayne Culver  
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**Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth is a Registered Charity, Number 1199568**

Date	Weekday	Mass Time	Where	Days	Proper
24-12-2023	Sunday	9am	St Bernard's	Sunday	4th Sunday of Advent
24-12-2023	Sunday	11am	St Michaels	Sunday	4th Sunday of Advent
24-12-2023	Sunday	7.00pm	St Bernard's	Sunday	<b>THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD VIGIL MASS</b>
25-12-2023	Monday	10am	St Michael's	Weekday	<b>THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD</b>
26-12-2023	Tuesday	9am	St Michael's	Weekday	St Stephen
27-12-2023	Wednesday	9am	St Bernard's	Weekday	St John
28-12-2023	Thursday	9am	St Michael's	Weekday	Holy Innocents
29-12-2023	Friday	No Mass	Churches Available	Weekday	St Thomas of Canterbury
30-12-2023	Saturday	9am	St Michael's	Weekday	Liturgy of the Day
31-12-2023	Sunday	9am	St Bernard's	Sunday	THE HOLY FAMILY of JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH,
31-12-2023	Sunday	11am	St Michael's	Sunday	THE HOLY FAMILY of JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH,
01-01-2024	Monday	9am	St Bernard's	Weekday	Mary, The Holy Mother of God
02-01-2024	Tuesday	9am	St Michael's	Weekday	Ss Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen
03-01-2024	Wednesday	9am	St Bernard's	Weekday	The Most Holy Name of Jesus
04-01-2024	Thursday	9am	St Michael's	Weekday	WORD & COMMUNION—NO MASS
05-01-2024	Friday	No Mass	Churches Available	Weekday	Liturgy of the Day
06-01-2024	Saturday	9am	St Michael's	Weekday	Liturgy of the Day
07-01-2024	Sunday	9am	St Bernard's	Sunday	EPIPHANY
07-01-2024	Sunday	11am	St Michael's	Sunday	EPIPHANY
08-01-2024	Monday	9am	St Bernard's	Weekday	The Baptism of The Lord

**WISHING YOU ALL A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

**We keep in our prayers the sick and housebound members of the parish:**

John Allen, Pauline Moore, Mike Slipper, Paola McCarthy and Hugh Kelly

To comply with GDPR legislation, the express permission of the sick parishioner is needed before inclusion in this part of the Parish newsletter. Registration forms are available at both churches.

**IN MEMORIAM**

We pray for the repose of the souls of the dear departed of the parish and for those whose anniversaries occur this week

24<sup>th</sup> John Adams (1971), Vincent Moylan (1989), Severiano Basanta-Gomez (1999),  
Marion Josephine Teague (2014)

25<sup>th</sup> Anthony Zammit (1984), John Brennan (1989)

27<sup>th</sup> Valerie Veal (2003)

28<sup>th</sup> Dennis Young (2001)

29<sup>th</sup> Kathleen Legge (2000), Nigel Patrick Bolton (2016), Violetta Baddour (2019)

30<sup>th</sup> Edward Peden (1992), Johnan McKenna (2005)

31<sup>st</sup> Rita Ahrens (2002)

**January**

1<sup>st</sup> Patricia Noguera (1981), Teresa Hewitt (2002), Peter Farrington (2006)

2<sup>nd</sup> Yvonne Lee (2005), Margaret Rita Wootten (2015), Margaret Mary Durling Pritchard (2018)

3<sup>rd</sup> Anne Josephine Morgan (2013)

4<sup>th</sup> James Painter (1985)

5<sup>th</sup> Mary Phillips (1967), Marie Allan-Burns (2002), Petra Ann Daniels (2015)

6<sup>th</sup> James Hannon (2000), Anne Margaret Candrl (2011)

8<sup>th</sup> Gennaro Di Carluccio (1996), Joseph Walsh (2001), Mary Christina Sycamore (May) (2015)

Pious tradition holds that Jesus promised St. Gertrude that a thousand souls would be released from purgatory each time the following prayer is said devoutly:  
"Eternal Father, I offer You the Most Precious Blood of Your Divine Son, Jesus, in union with the Masses said throughout the world today, for all the Holy Souls in Purgatory, for sinners everywhere, for sinners in the universal church, those in my own home and within my family. Amen."

**Some information from Father Innaiah**

**Fr. Innaiah's visits :** Fr. Innaiah is more than happy to be contacted on his email ([imaddineni@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:imaddineni@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk) or 07515001645 ) if you need a home visit or anointing. Father Innaiah will be delighted to meet up with you at the comfort of your own home.

**Sacraments :** Please contact Father Innaiah - Our Parish Priest directly to talk about Baptism, Communion, Confirmation, Wedding, Funeral arrangements for your family member etc ([imaddineni@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:imaddineni@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk) or 07515001645 )

**Congratulations :** Congratulations to Kevin Michael Patrick Brophy will be commissioned as Extra Ordinary Minister of Holy Eucharist on Christmas Day at St Michael's church. Fr. Innaiah is very grateful to Kevin for accepting this ministry and Kevin now joined other Extra ordinary Ministers. Many Thanks to Kevin.

**Thought for the week.**

"May each Christmas, as it comes, find us more and more like Him, who as at this time became a little child for our sake, more simple-minded, more humble, more holy, more affectionate, more resigned, more happy, more full of God." (St John Henry Newman)

Heating St Michael's Church during this cold weather is an enormous task for its aging heating system, the heating is now on for extended hours daily in an effort to retain heat. Your patience and fortitude is greatly appreciated and we ask that you please dress warmly for Mass for your comfort and health.

Please accept our regrets and sincere apologies that the church isn't as toasty warm as we would all like it to be.

#### 'LOCAL' CHURCHES HOLDING MIDNIGHT MASS

St Edmund's The Avenue, Southampton.

St Boniface Shirley, Southampton (Starts at 11pm)

Holy Family, Millbrook

#### The Christmas Collection for Father Innaiah

This Christmas our parish has again, a dedicated page on the fundraising platform *Give as you live*, which enables online donations to be made for Father Innaiah's Christmas gift. Here is the link to our dedicated Christmas Collection page.

<https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/fundraising/waterside-st-bernard-and-st-michael-catholic-parish-christmas-collection-2023>

#### Wednesday 27th December

Please note that there will be no Eucharistic Adoration, Rosary or Grandparents group this Wednesday at St Bernard's.

#### Parish Diary for 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> December

##### Sunday 24th December

St Bernard's Church 7pm Carols and Readings.

7.30pm Vigil Mass. The Nativity of the Lord

##### Monday 25th December

St Michael's Church 10am Mass. The Nativity of the Lord

#### @ Pontifex

On December 19th, The Pope wrote *For the inhabitants of the Holy Land, a #Christmas of pain and mourning looms. We do not want to leave them alone. May we stand by them in prayer and tangible aid. The suffering of Bethlehem is an open wound for the Middle East and the entire world.*

And on Dec 17th he posted *Let us #PrayTogether before the Nativity scene for children who will experience a difficult Christmas in places where there is war, in refugee camps, in situations of profound misery.*

#### Christmas Poinsettias.

As in previous years, parishioners are welcome to bring Poinsettias to both churches for display and to remember departed loved ones at Christmas. If you have not already brought a Poinsettia to church, please bring one along to Mass on Sunday. There are labels at both churches if you need them.

#### Last weeks Collections

St Bernard's	£92.35
St Michael's	£105.44
Envelopes	£195.00

Direct to bank figure for November £1366.00

The parish office will be closed over Christmas until  
Tuesday 2nd January 2024

The office phone will not be monitored during this time,  
but emails will be.

In an emergency contact Fr Innaiah Direct  
07515001645

#### Christmas Crib Offering

In the Diocese, our annual Christmas Crib offerings are given alternately one year to the Friends of the Holy Land and one year to the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre. This year, 2023, our Christmas Crib offerings will go to the Friends of the Holy Land. Friends of the Holy Land, is a non-political Christian Charity. Their mission is to secure a resilient and enduring Christian community in the West Bank, Gaza, Israel and Jordan. The focus of their work is providing practical help **directly** to the most needy and vulnerable of our Christian brothers and sisters through a balance of funding immediate relief of emergency needs and practical small projects to help create a sustainable future in the Holy Land – most importantly to give them **HOPE**.

If you would like to donate directly to The friends of the Holy Land the Charity's bank details are as follows:

**Name:** Friends of the Holy Land. **Account:** 24591211. **Sort Code:** 60-05-41

For visitors to our Parish, for your ease and comfort the addresses of our Churches are:

St Bernard's Church, 20A Southbourne Avenue, Holbury SO45 2NT

St Michael's Church, 6 Langdown Lawn, Hythe, Hampshire SO45 5GR

**A warm welcome:**

We warmly welcome all our parishioners & visitors to St Bernard's & St Michael's.

Please join us for some refreshments after 9am Mass on Sunday at St Bernard's, after 9am Mass on Tuesday at St Michael's & after Rosary on Wednesday at St Bernard's.

Refreshments after Mass on Sunday are kindly provided with the assistance of our wonderful volunteers, whom we cannot thank enough for the kind donation of their time and talents.

In our increasingly cashless society we recognise that online giving is becoming more popular. Forms for a monthly standing order are available from the back of the churches or if you prefer the flexibility of donating weekly please do feel welcome to donate directly into the Parish account.

Sort Code: 30-93-04

Account no: 00880001

Account name: CDP Waterside St Michael & St Bernard.

The Sacrament of Confession is available on Saturday mornings after Mass at St Michael's, or should you prefer, by appointment arranged with Fr Innaiah.

**Mgr Canon Jeremy Garratt reflects on Advents final Gospel reading in The Liturgy Project**

The bible is wonderful. All life is there. Today's Gospel is a case in point. The drama behind the words is worthy of a soap opera. The reading tells of Joseph's turmoil at finding that Mary, the girl he was betrothed to marry, was pregnant - and he knew it was not his child. Now betrothal in terms of the time and culture was much more binding than engagement. It meant that the couple were actually married, but they had not yet come to live together, which simply means that Joseph had not yet brought his bride across the threshold of his house, formally taking her into his care and assuming responsibility for her from her father. This is the scenario behind the story of the ten bridesmaids.

Joseph had yet to arrange this ceremony of formal adoption of Mary as his wife when he discovered she was pregnant. He knew, of course, that he was not the father, so this was evidence of Mary's adultery. We can imagine Joseph's turmoil. His sense of betrayal would surely wrestle with his dismay and disbelief that this innocent, gentle, beautiful and demure girl could possibly have engaged in sexual congress with another man. But the evidence was irrefutable.

Adultery was technically punishable by stoning to death. That Joseph clearly loved Mary dearly meant that he could not possibly expose her to that possibility and he was wrestling with how he could 'put her away quietly'. In fact, this would be difficult. There was only divorce and to take that option would not only open up speculation as to why Joseph would want to cut himself off from his new bride but would also condemn Mary to a lifetime of being ostracised and unmarried. This would mean she would have no means of support for her and her child and for, many women in that position, prostitution was the only option for survival.

A terrible dilemma for the just and good man Joseph. It was happily resolved by the appearance of the angel to let him know the extraordinary and incredible truth of Mary's conception and who the child was that she was bearing. Joseph, being a man of honour, was now prepared to take the shame of, apparently, having got his wife pregnant before their betrothal, but he weighed up that this was a small price to pay for facilitating the greatest event in the whole of human history.

Our Saviour was born into a situation of human scandal with the spectre of illegitimacy and adultery hanging over his conception, and the circumstance of his birth, as a member of the royal family, in a filthy stable with no proper roof over his head, laid in a manger instead of an ornate cot, surrounded not by courtiers or even family, with no midwife, but only lowly animals and humble shepherds to witness the event.

In his later ministry Jesus continued this countercultural stance, eating with prostitutes, tax collectors and sinners, touching lepers, healing the sick who, according to the thinking of the day, were only to blame for their plight because of their sins. In the Gospel today Matthew reminds us that Jesus is Emmanuel, a name which means God-is-with-us, and this means he is with us, in Jesus, in all the circumstances of our lives, but most importantly, he is close to the sick, the sinner, the outcast and the broken-hearted, and he commends these to us too, not for our judgment, but for our love and care.

## CHRISTMAS COOKING DEMONSTRATION & LUNCH

What a fantastic turnout for this wonderful event . Fe, and her marvelous partner in cooking, Jo, treated a very willing festive gathering to a scrumptious Christmas feast last Saturday. Their kindly donated efforts and your generous participation raised £80.00 for the parish. Sadly, I have no pictures of the event .....

Thank you Fe and Jo for your delicious cooking, and to Wayne who was most accomplished at following orders and helped with setting up the hall.

## THE CHRISTMAS OCTAVE

Once upon a time, many significant days in the Church had an Octave associated with them, for example the Epiphany of the Lord, Pentecost and Corpus Christi. When the Calendar was revised after the Second Vatican Council, only two remained: Easter and Christmas. However, unlike Easter when each day is celebrated as Easter Sunday, the Christmas Octave is rich with a variety of celebrations of Saints for the first part of the day and reverts to the Christmas focus in the evening.

**Tuesday 26th December:** The Feast of St Stephen the First Martyr, patron of Deacons and Altar servers

**Wednesday 27th December:** The feast of St John the Evangelist, patron of our Cathedral and the only Apostle not to suffer a martyr's death.

**Thursday 28th December:** we recall the Holy Innocents who gave their lives during the great slaughter by King Herod.

**Friday 29th December:** we celebrate the bishop and martyr, St Thomas of Canterbury, patron of the secular clergy and principal patron of the City of Portsmouth.

**Sunday 31st December** as the secular year draws to a close we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph when we recall the wonderful example of that family *par excellence*.

May all these holy men and women guide us and pray for us during this Christmas week.

*A Date for your Diary*

### THE GREAT STORY OF JESUS RETREAT

Liza Nahajski invites you to sign up for The Great Story of Jesus Retreat to be held at St Peter's Pastoral Centre, Winchester SO23 9SR on **Saturday 13th January 2024** from 10am-4pm...

Start the new year with this retreat delivered by Sr Margarida Mondral of the Verbum Dei Community. Refresh and reboot with a renewed appreciation of the core of our faith: the gift of the life death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit to animate our lived faith. This may appeal to all who want to reflect more deeply on Jesus and how his life relates to our lives. Please apply for a place and more details: [lnahajski@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:lnahajski@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

*Christmas is the perfect time to sit down with warm drink, a mince pie (or the refreshment of your choice) and get lost between the pages of a book. Something like the Pope's latest maybe.....*

**Pope Francis pens the introduction for his new book entitled "Christmas at the Nativity", which features various texts by the Pope on the Nativity scene and has been released in English, Italian, French, and Portuguese.**

**By Vatican News**

The Italian version of a book by Pope Francis was released on Tuesday 21 November, entitled "*Il mio presepe*" (Christmas at the Nativity). The book was released in English on 1 November by publishing house Focolare Media/New City Press and can be purchased at the following link: <https://www.focolaremedia.com/bookstore>. The text contains a previously unpublished introduction by Pope Francis and a series of texts, reflections, speeches, and homilies that the Pope has dedicated to the Nativity scene and the characters that populate it.

## MASS READINGS FOR THE 4<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY IN ADVENT

### **First Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-5,8-12,14,16**

*Once David had settled into his house and the Lord had given him rest from all the enemies surrounding him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, 'Look, I am living in a house of cedar while the ark of God dwells in a tent.' Nathan said to the king, 'Go and do all that is in your mind, for the Lord is with you.' But that very night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: 'Go and tell my servant David, "Thus the Lord speaks: Are you the man to build me a house to dwell in? I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be leader of my people Israel; I have been with you on all your expeditions; I have cut off all your enemies before you. I will give you fame as great as the fame of the greatest on earth. I will provide a place for my people Israel; I will plant them there and they shall dwell in that place and never be disturbed again; nor shall the wicked continue to oppress them as they did, in the days when I appointed judges over my people Israel; I will give them rest from all their enemies. The Lord will make you great; the Lord will make you a House. And when your days are ended and you are laid to rest with your ancestors, I will preserve the offspring of your body after you and make his sovereignty secure. I will be a father to him and he a son to me; if he does evil, I will punish him with the rod such as men use, with strokes such as mankind gives. Your House and your sovereignty will always stand secure before me and your throne be established for ever."*

**Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 88(89):2-5,27,29** *I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.*

### **Second Reading: Romans 16:25-27**

*Glory to him who is able to give you the strength to live according to the Good News I preach, and in which I proclaim Jesus Christ, the revelation of a mystery kept secret for endless ages, but now so clear that it must be broadcast to pagans everywhere to bring them to the obedience of faith. This is only what scripture has predicted, and it is all part of the way the eternal God wants things to be. He alone is wisdom; give glory therefore to him through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. Amen.*

### **Gospel Acclamation:**

**Alleluia, Alleluia!** *I am the handmaid of the Lord: let what you have said be done to me. Alleluia!*

### **Gospel: Luke 1:26-38**

*The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel answered 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her.*

**Communion Antiphon:** *Rise up, Jerusalem, stand on the heights, and see the joy that is coming to you from God.*

## MASS READINGS FOR THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD VIGIL MASS

### **First reading Isaiah 62:1-5**

*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.*

**Responsorial Psalm Psalm 88(89):4-5,16-17,27,29** *I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.*

### **Second reading Acts 13:16-17,22-25**

*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**

**Alleluia, alleluia!** *Tomorrow there will be an end to the sin of the world and the saviour of the world will be our king. Alleluia!*

### **Gospel Matthew 1:1-25**

*A genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham:*

*Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah, Tamar being their mother, Perez was the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram, Ram was the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon, Salmon was the father of Boaz, Rahab being his mother, Boaz was the father of Obed, Ruth being his mother, Obed was the father of Jesse; and Jesse was the father of King David.*

*David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife, Solomon was the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, Abijah the father of Asa, Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, Joram the father of Azariah, Azariah was the father of Jotham, Jotham the father of Ahaz, Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amon, Amon the father of Josiah; and Josiah was the father of Jechoniah and his brothers.*

*Then the deportation to Babylon took place. After the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud, Abiud the father of Eliakim, Eliakim the father of Azor, Azor was the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Achim, Achim the father of Eliud, Eliud was the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, Matthan the father of Jacob; and Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary; of her was born Jesus who is called Christ. The sum of generations is therefore: fourteen from Abraham to David; fourteen from David to the Babylonian deportation; and fourteen from the Babylonian deportation to Christ.*

*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 is 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 and, though he had not had intercourse with her, she gave birth to a son; and he named him Jesus.*

**Communion Antiphon:** *The glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all flesh will see the salvation of our God.*

## MASS READINGS FOR THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

### **First reading Isaiah 52:7-10**

*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.*

### **Responsorial Psalm Psalm 97(98):1-6**

*All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.*

### **Second reading Hebrews 1:1-6**

*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 hallowed day has dawned upon us. Come, you nations, worship the Lord, for today a great light has shone down upon the earth. **Alleluia!***

### **Gospel John 1:1-18**

*In the beginning was the Word: and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things came to be, not one thing had its being but through him. All that came to be had life in him and that life was the light of men, a light that shines in the dark, a light that darkness could not overpower. A man came, sent by God. His name was John. He came as a witness, as a witness to speak for the light, so that everyone might believe through him. He was not the light, only a witness to speak of the light. The Word was the true light that enlightens all men; and he was coming into the world. He was in the world that had its being through him, and the world did not know him. He came to his own domain and his own people did not accept him. But to all who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to all who believe in the name of him who was born not out of human stock or urge of the flesh or will of man but of God himself. The Word was made flesh, he lived among us, and we saw his glory, the glory that is his as the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth. John appears as his witness. He proclaims: 'This is the one of whom I said: He who comes after me ranks before me because he existed before me.' Indeed, from his fullness we have, all of us, received – yes, grace in return for grace, since, though the Law was given through Moses, grace and truth have come through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; it is the only Son, who is nearest to the Father's heart, who has made him known.*

**Communion Antiphon** *All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.*

## MASS READINGS FOR SUNDAY 31<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY

**First reading** Genesis 15:1-6, 21:1-3.

**Responsorial Psalm** Ps 104:1-6,8-9 rrv 7-8

**Second reading** Hebrews 11: 8,11-12,17-19

**Gospel Acclamation** *Alleluia, alleluia!* Hebrews 1:1-2. **Alleluia!**

**Gospel** Luke 2:22-40