

CHRISTMAS EVE

THE
WORD
MADE
FLESH

Born *in a Manger*

THE WORD MADE FLESH

Born in a Manger

A SERVICE FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

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THE WORD MADE FLESH

Born in a Manger

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ABOUT “THE WORD MADE FLESH: BORN IN A MANGER”

On Christmas Eve, we celebrate and ponder the humble birth of Jesus as he rests in a manger bed of straw, though he is the Son of God. Hymns include “O Little Town of Bethlehem,” “Away in a Manger,” “Joy to the World” and “Silent Night.” Use with the Word Made Flesh Advent series or alone.

Other coordinating resources are available. Call Creative Communications for the Parish at 1-800-325-9414, or visit us on the web at creativecommunications.com for current pricing and availability.

Signature collection WD7SK

Complete collection WD7CK

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NEWSLETTER NOTICE

On Christmas Eve, join us as we celebrate and ponder the humble birth of Jesus as he rests in a manger of straw, though he is the Son of God. Jesus is the Word Made Flesh who is God With Us.

BULLETIN NOTICE

On this Christmas Eve, we celebrate and ponder the humble birth of Jesus as he rests in a manger of straw, though he is the Son of God. Jesus is the Word Made Flesh who is God With Us.

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ORDER OF SERVICE

*And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him
in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger. Luke 2:7*

Opening Hymn.....Joy to the World (Antioch CM and refrain)

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare him room
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

- The **Epistle Reading**, Galatians 4:4-7, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

¶ But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

- The **Gospel Reading, Part 1**, Luke 2:1-7, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

¶ In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

- The **Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune St. Louis 86 86 76 86, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary,
And, gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wond’ring love.
O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the king
And peace to all the earth!

- The **Gospel Reading, Part 2**, Luke 2:8-14, continues, spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

- The **Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Gloria 77 77 and refrain, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o’er the plains,
And the mountains in reply,
Echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heav’nly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

- The **Gospel Reading, Part 3**, Luke 2:15-20, continues, spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

- The **Sermon Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune *Tempus Adest Floridum 76 76 D*, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;
 There he lay, the Undefined, to the world a stranger.
 Such a babe in such a place, can he be the Savior?
 Ask the saved of all the race who have found his favor.

Angels sang about his birth, wise men sought and found him;
 Heav'n's star shone brightly forth glory all around him.
 Shepherds saw the wondrous sight, heard the angels singing;
 All the plains were lit that night, all the hills were ringing.

Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;
 He is still the Undefined but no more a stranger.
 Son of God of humble birth, beautiful the story;
 Praise his name in all the earth; hail the King of glory.

- The **Sermon** is delivered by the pastor:

¶ And so at last we have come to Bethlehem. This is the night of great drama. The late 19th-century painting by the French artist James Tissot entitled “Saint Joseph Seeks a Lodging in Bethlehem” depicts Joseph escorting Mary and the donkey she rides upon through the streets of the town, calling up a set of stairs to an innkeeper or a servant. But we know they will be turned away.

This moment is dramatized in the Latin American tradition of *Las Posadas*. *Las Posadas* is an over 400-year-old celebration that takes place over nine days, during which a small child dressed as an angel leads a group of people—mostly children—through the streets of town, going door-to-door like carollers. Indeed, they do sing carols, and read Scripture and even receive treats, but they also carry images of Mary and Joseph with them and stop at selected homes to ask for lodging for Mary and Joseph. Often, just like it’s imagined in Tissot’s painting, each home replies, “No *posadas*,” “No shelter,” until finally a designated home or church welcomes the young pilgrims, to much celebration.

As Joseph knocked on doors, looking for a guest room somewhere in this little town, the city of David, what must have been going through his mind? Did he feel the urgency in his stomach or his shoulders? And what of Mary? Was she anxious knowing the promised child would be born soon? Or were they serene and unbothered, trusting completely in God’s providence. Scripture doesn’t tell us. The narration is terse: “And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid