

# THE CATHOLIC PARISHES OF CHIPPENHAM & CORSHAM

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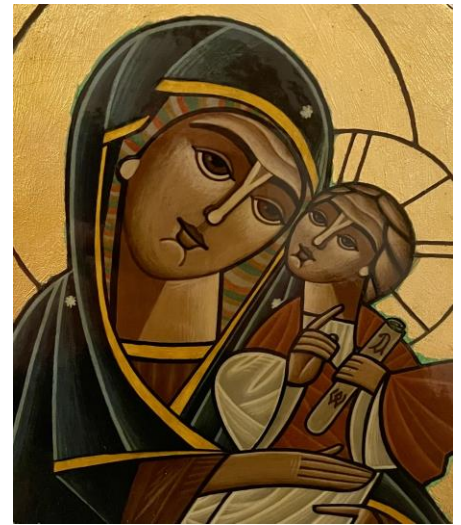
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## FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT B

5pm (Sat) (Ch) Vigil Mass (*M Williams*)

9am (Cor) Sung Mass of Advent 4

(*Pro Populo*)

11am (Ch) Sung Mass of Advent 4

(*Pro Populo*)

## SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (CHRISTMAS)

5pm (Sat) (Ch)

Vigil Mass of Christmas (*Pro Populo*)

9am (Cor) Solemn Mass (*Pro Populo*)

11am (Ch) Solemn Mass (*Pr. Intention*)

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> December

Feast of Saint Stephen, First Martyr

No Mass (Ch)

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> December

Feast of Saint John, Ap, Evangelist

12pm Mass (Cor) (*Vocations*)

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> December

Feast of the Holy Innocents, Martyrs

12.10pm Mass (Ch) (*Maria Stadnyk*)

Friday 29<sup>th</sup> December

Feast of Saint Thomas Becket,

Bishop, Martyr, Patron of the

Pastoral Clergy in England and Wales

12pm Mass (Cor) (*For our Priests*)

Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> December

Sixth Day in Octave of Christmas

4.15pm-4.45pm Confessions (Ch)

4.15pm Eucharistic Adoration (Ch)

4.50pm Benediction (Ch)

## SUNDAY 31<sup>ST</sup> FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH

5pm (Sat) (Ch) Vigil Mass (*Pro Populo*)

9am (Cor) Sung Mass (*Pro Populo*)

11am (Ch) Sung Mass (*R&S Molloy*)

## SUNDAY ADVENT 4 SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH

**THE SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD** This year marks the 800th anniversary of the first living Nativity established by Saint Francis of Assisi in the Italian town of Greccio. The Holy Father said in his audience this week that “the Nativity scene was created to bring us back to what matters: to God who comes to dwell among us.” “Saint Francis doesn’t desire to create a beautiful work of art,” the Pope said, “but through the Nativity scene to provoke amazement at the extreme humility of the Lord, at the hardships he suffered, for love of us, in the poor grotto of Bethlehem.” As we contemplate the Crib in our Churches this weekend, let us continue to gaze upon this scene of God made Man and pray that the Christ may find a manger waiting him in our hearts, that we may continue to give birth to the Christ in our world today. Let us not simply be content for just telling or celebrating the “then and there” Christmas story, let us live the “here and now” Christmas story, allowing Jesus to be born again in us. May the love of the Christ Child fill your hearts this Christmas and may he bless you, your families and friends with his presence. Wishing everyone a blessed and Holy Christmas. Fr Michael

**ADVENT 4 & CHRISTMAS** Christmas Eve is also the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent this year. This means we need to participate in two Masses to meet our Sunday and Christmas Day obligations.

**CHILDREN’S NATIVITY & CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE** Fri 29<sup>th</sup> Dec at 5pm in St Patrick’s Church. All are welcome from both parishes.

**CHRISTMAS OFFERING ENVELOPES** are available in both Churches today. This offering is the traditional offering to support your parish priest. Thank you.

**RCIA - JOURNEY IN FAITH** our next session takes place on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January evening at 7pm in the office at St Mary’s Chippenham. We look forward to welcoming you. Theme: ‘Mary and the Hope of Heaven’, Death, judgment, and our longing for eternal life. Holiness, the saints, and our hope for heaven. What Catholics believe about the Blessed Virgin Mary.

**CRIB OFFERINGS** are invited for the Clifton Children’s Society.

**COME LET US ADORE HIM** The next Adoration at St Patrick’s will be after Mass on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January for one hour. The response in both parishes has been very encouraging. If you could

commit to a once-a-week regular time adoration between Thursday 1pm - 6pm and/or Saturday 2pm to 4.45pm (after Christmas) at St Mary's it will be appreciated. This can be done by filling in a short form available at the back of the Church.

**SUNDAY 31<sup>ST</sup> FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH**

5pm (Sat) (Ch) Vigil Mass (*R & S Malloy*)

9am (Cor) Sung Mass (*Pro Populo*)

11am (Ch) Sung Mass (*Pro Populo*)

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> January

Solemnity of Mary,  
the Holy Mother of God No Mass

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January

Ss Basil the Gt and Gregory

Nazianzen, Bps, Doctors.

12.10pm Mass (Ch)

Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January

The Most Holy Name of Jesus

12pm Mass (Cor) (*In Thanksgiving*)

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> January

Weekday of Christmas Time

12.10pm Mass (Ch) (*John Dawber*)

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January

Weekday of Christmas Time

12pm Mass (Cor) (*Holy Souls*)

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> January

Weekday of Christmas Time

4.15pm-4.45pm Confessions (Ch)

4.15pm Eucharistic Adoration (Ch)

4.50pm Benediction (Ch)

**SUNDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> THE SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD**

5pm (Sat) (Ch) Vigil Mass (*L & J Wilkins*)

9am (Cor) Sung Mass (*Pro Populo*)

11am (Ch) Sung Mass (*Pro Populo*)

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION 2024** The first meeting for parents for this year's First Holy Communion group is Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January at 6pm in St Mary's Hall (in St Mary's Place, behind the church). The first teaching session for children follows on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January. More information will be given at the parents' meeting. The most important part of preparation for first Holy Communion is the weekly celebration of Sunday Mass.

**SR MARY & POOR SERVANTS OF THE MOTHER OF GOD** Our long-term parishioners of St Mary's will remember the work carried out by Sr Mary setting up convents in Kenya and Tanzania. The sisters have sent us a full-colour leaflet about their work which continues in Africa, following on from Sr Mary setting up convents. The leaflets are available on both noticeboards.

**CAFOD** Wishing you all in your Parish: joyful but peaceful and filled with hope Christmas, celebrating the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ! Thank you for all your support to suffering brothers and sisters around Our Common Home! CAFOD is asking people to give their CAFOD World Gifts: Therapy Through Play for children affected by war. [For a better quality read of the gift](#) look at the downloadable Link: [Therapy through play for children from war torn countries.](#)

**THE PARISH OFFICE** will be closed over the Christmas period, and it will re-open on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION - CONFESSIONS** are heard at St Mary's on Saturday between 4.15 pm and 4.45pm and at St Patrick's after the weekday masses or by prior arrangement with Fr Michael.

**CHRISTMAS BULLETIN** Please note that this is a double bulletin for Advent 4, Christmas and the Holy Family as the office is closed this week.

**PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS THIS WEEK**

**The Sick:** Corsham: Richard Keat, Sheila Taylor, Christopher Brawl, Lindsay Price. Chippenham: Brian Tuersley, Lydia Connell, David Lunt, Jon Taylor, Michael Kenny, Mike Merry, Nic Pollastrone, Chris Rosario, James Carine, Elena Alberti, Jenny Coates, Sue Sheehan. Pray for all suffering with Coronavirus, all in our hospitals, nursing homes and those who care for them.

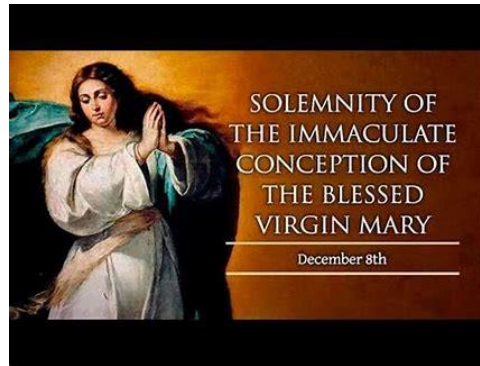
**RIP Anniversaries:** George Hall, Robert Gough, Anna Kaplinska, Maureen Rees, David Evans, Toni Conway, Lil Rooney, Emily Hall, Norina Fernandes, Elsie McCarthy, Aaron Wicks, Rob Jones, Ken Beaven, Ann Bower, Sheila Milner, Tom Gartland, Sr Monica Mary, Ellen Hall, John Dawber, Jim Lynch, Baby Richard Green, Geoff Stevens, Hespzibah Rumbold, Lil Gardener, Daphne Burke.

**The Holy Father's Prayer December Intention:** We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programmes which value their active participation.

**Diocesan Prayer Link:** Saint Bernadette, Whitchurch, Saint Dunstan, Keynsham; Saint Thomas More, Marlborough, with Pewsey.

*In compliance with the requirements of GDPR permission must be sought from an individual (or next of kin) before their name can be added to a list of those who are sick. Do please advise us of any changes to be made to this list.*

## December – The Month of the Immaculate Conception



December is traditionally the month of the Immaculate Conception of Mary. In keeping the Blessed Virgin free from the stain of sin from the moment of her conception, God presents us with a glorious example of what humankind was meant to be. Mary is truly the second Eve, because, like Eve, she entered the world without sin. Unlike Eve, she remained sinless throughout her life—a life that she dedicated fully to the will of God.

The Immaculate Conception was not, as many people mistakenly believe, a precondition for Christ's act of redemption but the result of it. Standing outside of time, God knew that Mary would humbly submit herself to His will and in His love for this perfect servant, He applied to her at the moment of her conception the redemption, won by Christ, that all Christians receive at their Baptism.

It is appropriate, then, that the Church has long declared the month in which the Blessed Virgin not only was conceived but gave birth to the Saviour of the world as the Month of the Immaculate Conception.

### The Prayer of Pope Francis to the Immaculate Mother

O Mary, our Immaculate Mother,  
On your feast day I come to you,  
And I come not alone:  
I bring with me all those with whom your Son entrusted to me,  
In this city of Rome and in the entire world,  
That you may bless them and preserve them from harm.  
I bring to you, Mother, children,  
Especially those who are alone, abandoned,  
And for this reason are tricked and exploited.  
I bring to you, Mother, families,  
Who carry forward life and society  
With their daily and hidden efforts;  
In a special way the families who struggle the most  
For their many internal and external problems.  
I bring to you, Mother, all workers, both men and women,  
And I entrust to you especially those who, out of need,  
Are forced to work in an unworthy profession  
And those who have lost work or are unable to find it.  
We are in need of your immaculate gaze,  
To rediscover the ability to look upon persons and things  
With respect and awareness,  
Without egotistical or hypocritical interests.  
We are in need of your immaculate heart,  
To love freely,  
Without secondary aims but seeking the good of the other,  
With simplicity and sincerity, renouncing masks and tricks.  
We are in need of your immaculate hands,  
To caress with tenderness,

To touch the flesh of Jesus  
In our poor, sick, or despised brethren,  
To raise up those who have fallen and support those who waver.  
We are in need of your immaculate feet,  
To go toward those who know not how to make the first step,  
To walk on the paths of those who are lost,  
To find those who feel alone.  
We thank you, O Mother, because in showing yourself to us  
You free us of all stain of sin;  
You remind us that what comes first is the grace of God,  
The love of Jesus Christ who gave his life for us,  
The strength of the Holy Spirit which renews all things.  
Let us not give in to discouragement,  
But, trusting in your constant help,  
Let us engage ourselves fully in renewal of self,  
Of this city and of the entire world.  
Pray for us, Holy Mother of God!

## **Prayer for Reconciliation and Peace in the Holy Land**



God of justice and peace  
We bring before you the Israeli and Palestinian people  
in all their need, pain and fear.  
Bring an end to humiliation and injustice, corruption and violence.  
Prosper those who work for peace with justice.  
May all peoples enjoy security and prosperity.  
We ask this through your Son, the Prince of peace,  
Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

## **A Prayer for Ukraine**

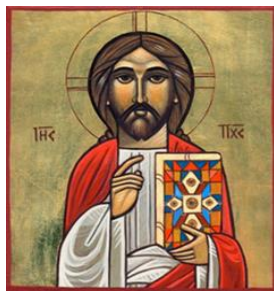




Loving God,  
We pray for the people of Ukraine, for all those suffering or afraid,  
that you will be close to them and protect them.  
We pray for world leaders,  
for compassion, strength and wisdom to guide their choices.  
We pray for the world that in this moment of crisis,  
we may reach out in solidarity to our brothers and sisters in need.  
May we walk in your ways so that peace and justice  
become a reality for the people of Ukraine  
and for all the world.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## THE WORD THIS WEEK

### FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (YEAR B)



#### First reading

2 Samuel 7:1-5,8-12,14,16

A reading from the second book of Samuel

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."

The word of the Lord.

#### Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 88(89):2-5,27,29

I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.

I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord;  
through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth.  
Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever,  
that your truth is firmly established as the heavens.

'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.

'He will say to me: "You are my father,  
my God, the rock who saves me."  
I will keep my love for him always;  
with him my covenant shall last.'

### **Second reading**

**Romans 16:25-27**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

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.

The word of the Lord.

### **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**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

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.

The Gospel of the Lord.

# SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (CHRISTMAS)

Monday 25 December 2023

Mass during the Day

## 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.

The word of the Lord

## Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 97(98):1-6

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

Sing a new song to the Lord  
for he has worked wonders.  
His right hand and his holy arm  
have brought salvation.

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.

All the ends of the earth have seen  
the salvation of our God.  
Shout to the Lord, all the earth,  
ring out your joy.

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.

## Second reading

Hebrews 1:1-6

*A reading from the letter to the 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.

The word of the Lord

### **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**

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to John*

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 for 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.

The Gospel of the Lord

## **FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH**

### **First reading**

**Ecclesiasticus 3:2-6,12-14**

*A reading from the Book of Ecclesiasticus*

The Lord honours the father in his children,  
and upholds the rights of a mother over her sons.  
Whoever respects his father is atoning for his sins,  
he who honours his mother is like someone amassing a fortune.  
Whoever respects his father will be happy with children of his own,  
he shall be heard on the day when he prays.  
Long life comes to him who honours his father,  
he who sets his mother at ease is showing obedience to the Lord.  
My son, support your father in his old age,  
do not grieve him during his life.  
Even if his mind should fail, show him sympathy,  
do not despise him in your health and strength;  
for kindness to a father shall not be forgotten  
but will serve as reparation for your sins.

The word of the Lord.

### **Responsorial Psalm**

**Psalm 127(128):1-5**

*O blessed are those who fear the Lord  
and walk in his ways!*

O blessed are those who fear the Lord  
and walk in his ways!  
By the labour of your hands you shall eat.  
You will be happy and prosper.

Your wife will be like a fruitful vine  
in the heart of your house;  
your children like shoots of the olive,  
around your table.

Indeed thus shall be blessed  
the man who fears the Lord.  
May the Lord bless you from Zion  
all the days of your life!

### **Second reading**

**Colossians 3:12-21**

*A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Colossians*

You are God's chosen race, his saints; he loves you, and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same. Over all these clothes, to keep them together and complete them, put on love. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together as parts of one body. Always be thankful.

Let the message of Christ, in all its richness, find a home with you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God; and never say or do anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Wives, give way to your husbands, as you should in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and treat them with gentleness. Children, be obedient to your parents always, because that is what will please the Lord. Parents, never drive your children to resentment or you will make them feel frustrated.

The word of the Lord.

### **Gospel Acclamation**

Alleluia, alleluia!  
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.  
Alleluia!

### **Gospel**

**Luke 2:22-40**

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke*

When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, – observing what stands written in the Law of the Lord: Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord – and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is said in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.

Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was an upright and devout man; he looked forward to Israel's comforting and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord. Prompted by the Spirit he came to the Temple and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, he took him into his arms and blessed God; and he said:

‘Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace,  
just as you promised;  
because my eyes have seen the salvation  
which you have prepared for all the nations to see,  
a light to enlighten the pagans and the glory of your people Israel.’

As the child's father and mother stood there wondering at the things that were being said about him, Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, ‘You see this child: he is destined for the fall and for the rising of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected – and a sword will pierce your own soul too – so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare.’

There was a prophetess also, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was well on in years. Her days of girlhood over, she had been married for seven years before becoming a widow. She was now eighty-four years old and never left the Temple, serving God night and day with fasting and prayer. She came by just at that moment and began to praise God; and she spoke of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem.

When they had done everything the Law of the Lord required, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him.

The Gospel of the Lord.