

SUNDAY MASS

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

The shepherds went in haste, and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant lying in a manger.

FIRST READING: 1 Samuel 1:20-22, 24-28.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 84.

RESPONSE:

Blessed are they who dwell in your house, O Lord.

1. How lovely is your dwelling place,
O Lord of hosts.
My soul is longing and yearning
for the courts of the Lord.
My heart and my flesh cry out
to the living God. **R**
2. Blessed are they who dwell in your house,
forever singing your praise.
Blessed is the man whose strength is in you,
whose heart is set on pilgrim ways. **R**
3. O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer;
give ear, O God of Jacob.
Turn your eyes, O God, our shield;
look on the face of your anointed. **R**
4. One day within your courts
is better than a thousand elsewhere.
The threshold of the house of God
I prefer to the dwellings of the wicked. **R**

SECOND READING: 1 John 3:1-2, 21-24.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, alleluia! Open our hearts, O Lord, that we may give heed to the words of your Son. Alleluia.

GOSPEL: Luke 2:41-52.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON:

Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived among us.



During these days of Christmas joy and cheer we wish you the
Love, Joy and Peace
that only the Christ-child can bring – from all of us at RPP



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THE WEEK AHEAD

Live the Word

Mon 27 Dec ST JOHN, AE

1 John 1:1-4; Psalm 97; John 20:2-8

We have all received the gift of faith, but how do we live it? Today's psalm tells us: "Be glad... and give thanks." Joy and gratitude are true hallmarks of our daily, lived faith.

Tue 28 Dec HOLY INNOCENTS, Ms

1 John 1:5-2:2; Psalm 124; Matthew 2:13-18

What we focus on tends to expand and grow. When we are overwhelmed by a situation, we can either choose fear or we can choose love. Love focuses on God's power and wisdom, not our perceived lack.

Wed 29 Dec (St Thomas Becket, BM)

1 John 2:3-11; Psalm 96; Luke 2:22-35

Growth simply takes time, and much of our spiritual journey is waiting on this growth. If you are frustrated and impatient with yourself, remember God had to wait 30 years for Jesus to grow to maturity.

Thu 30 Dec Liturgy of the Day

1 John 2:12-17; Psalm 96; Luke 2:36-40

The prophetess Anna's promise of hope balanced Mary's pain, prophesied by Simeon. Looking closely at our own lives, the Spirit also sends wise ones to balance our pain with the gift of hope when we are in need of it.

Fri 31 Dec (St Sylvester I, P)

1 John 2:18-21; Psalm 96; John 1:1-18

Many of us do not recognise our unique inner giftedness and the contribution we make to life just by being who we are. Each and every one of us are beautiful in God's eyes.

Sat 1 Jan MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

Numbers 6:22-27; Psalm 67; Luke 2:16-21

Mary's greatness lay in her humility. It is not surprising that Jesus, who lived so close to her, seemed determined to have us learn one thing above all: humility of heart – St Teresa of Calcutta

Sun 2 Jan EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72; Matthew 2:1-12

How do we know which is the straight path? "Anyone who sets off on the path of doing good to others is already drawing near to God... walking towards the fullness of love." – Pope Francis.

(KEY: **SOLEMNITY**; FEAST; Memorial; (Optional Memorial)
A=Apostle; E=Evang.; M=Martyr; B=Bishop; P=Pope; D=Dr

Catholic Link

CHRISTMAS

Holy Family • Year C
Divine Office: Week 1 • 26 December 2021

Truly Our Brother

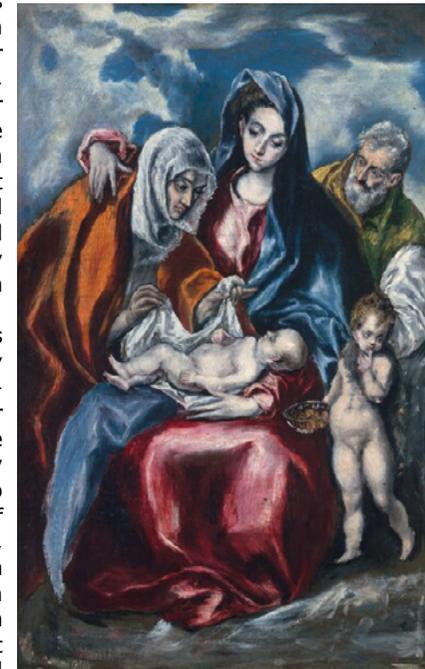
During 2021 *Catholic Link* ran a series of articles on *Fratelli Tutti – Brothers and Sisters All* – the encyclical of Pope Francis inspired by Saint Francis of Assisi, that all of creation is God's family. Not just human beings but also Brother Sun and Sister Moon, Brother Wind and Sister Water. This is of course eminently biblical, with St Paul declaring Christ to be the "firstborn of all creation" (Col 1:15) and the "firstborn of many brothers and sisters" (Rom 8:29).

This weekend, Christmas and the Feast of the Holy Family are celebrated back-to-back. Let us consider Jesus' humanity in the light of these feasts. Many people find it easier to believe in the divinity of Christ than in his humanity, mostly because we have a problem accepting our own humanity in its corruption and depravity. We forget that when God created humans he said it was "very" good (Gen 1:31).

Jesus is truly human. Nine months before his birth he began as a fertilised ovum at the Annunciation to Mary. For about two weeks he was a living cell waiting to be planted on the wall of Mary's uterus. At that stage he became an embryo whose cells were constantly dividing and growing. Eventually, as a spinal column formed, and as a nervous system and vital organs took shape, he became a foetus and began to hear the heartbeat of his mother. "Blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus", we pray to Mary. Finally, the day arrived when this tiny infant was birthed

into the big wide world, took his first gasp of air, let out a cry, and then his own heartbeat took over. Jesus is as truly human as you and me. He is truly our brother, our "eldest" in the new dispensation of God's saving plan.

Being human, as we know, is not merely a physical reality. We are social beings whose humanity is formed (or deformed, sadly) in a family. Our first social contact with another human being is of course in our mother's womb. But then we undergo another gestation in the "womb" of family life. The nourishment we now require most of all is to be loved and to learn to love. It is to grow in "wisdom and maturity" as Jesus did (Luke 2:52). The Feast of the Holy Family highlights this point. Jesus enjoyed the love and affection of Mary and Joseph. Joseph, while not being Jesus' biological father, is a model for us of fatherly responsibility, protecting his family from



El Greco's Holy Family with Saint Anne and the Infant John the Baptist, c. 1595/1600

danger, setting up a home for them, and teaching Jesus the skills of a carpenter (in the Gospels Jesus is referred to both as a "carpenter" in Mark 6:3, and as "the son of the carpenter" in Matthew 13:55).

Today we celebrate with joy our Christian narrative. It is a narrative that unfolds against the glorious Divine narrative before the beginning of time when God said: "Let there be..." (Gen 1:3,6,9 etc.). It is a narrative that reaches its climax when "God so loved the world that he sent his only Son..." (John 3:16). This is our story; this is our song!

