

# Christ is Born

Christmas Day  
Cycle C | December 25, 2024

## WISDOM FROM THE CELLS

This Christmas, I am thinking about my family and loved ones. After meditating on Jesus' birth and thinking back on how God has been birthing in my life, I would like to share these thoughts with my loved ones this Christmas.

To my loved ones, I meditated on the birth of Jesus and this is what I would like to tell you about how God has birthing in my life and how I see him being birthed in your life. I always pray that Jesus is in your lives. Haven't you seen and heard what Jesus has done in my life? I'm in a place where flowers don't grow yet, Jesus has given me hope, faith and love where it's a rarity. He has given me life where it doesn't seem to exist. Aren't you curious to know what he can do in yours?

When I talked to someone close to me last night she talked me about going to church. My prayers have been answered! She is finally asking for help after so many years of addiction. Thank you, Jesus.

- Orlando, a former lifer.



Artwork by T. Larimer

## PENITENTIAL RITE

**Lord, have mercy.  
Christ, have mercy.  
Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life.

**R. Amen.**

## OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray:

Lord,

Let your Word be born in us and live today among us. Let your Word become flesh among us by our listening to you and doing what you ask of us: promoting peace, truth, justice, and love. Let people see Jesus alive among us through the love we show.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. **R. Amen.**



# LITURGY OF THE WORD

## First Reading: Isaiah 52: 7-10

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings glad tidings, announcing peace, bearing good news, announcing salvation, and saying to Zion, "Your God is King!" Hark! Your sentinels raise a cry, together they shout for joy, for they see directly, before their eyes, the LORD restoring Zion. Break out together in song, O ruins of Jerusalem! For the LORD comforts his people, he redeems Jerusalem. The LORD has bared his holy arm in the sight of all the nations; all the ends of the earth will behold the salvation of our God.

The Word of the Lord.

**R. Thanks be to God.**

## Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 98: 1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6

**R. All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.**

Sing to the LORD a new song,  
for he has done wondrous deeds;  
his right hand has won victory for him,  
his holy arm.

**R. All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.**

The LORD has made his salvation known:  
in the sight of the nations he has revealed his  
justice.

He has remembered his kindness and his  
faithfulness  
toward the house of Israel.

**R. All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.**

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

Sing joyfully to the LORD, all you lands;  
break into song; sing praise.

**R. All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.**

## Second Reading: Hebrews 1: 1-6

Brothers and sisters: In times past, God spoke in partial and various ways to our ancestors through the prophets; in these last days, he has spoken to us through the Son, whom he made heir of all things and through whom he created the universe, who is the refulgence of his glory, the very imprint of his being, and who sustains all things by his mighty word. When he had accomplished purification from sins, he took his seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high, as far superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say: *You are my son; this day I have begotten you?* Or again: *I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me?* And again, when he leads the firstborn into the world, he says: *Let all the angels of God worship him.*

The Word of the Lord.

**R. Thanks be to God.**

## Gospel: John 1: 1-5, 9-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came to be through him, but the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, but his own people did not accept him. But to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to those who believe in his name, who were born not by natural generation nor by human choice nor by a man's decision but of God. And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**



# MEDITATION: BIRTH

it was a cold night  
samuel's breath was icing  
as he walked  
toward the stable  
where he went every night  
to feed the animals

how he wished  
he had not been forced  
to leave the warmth  
of his house  
with his three children  
and his wife

bethlehem  
was the only place  
where he could find work  
because of having  
been incarcerated  
he found it hard  
being away from home  
he felt as a stranger  
in this town  
especially by the way  
people looked at him  
at his tattoos  
how he wished  
he could be with his family  
instead of having to work  
these long hours  
for a small salary

sometimes  
he thought it was easier  
being locked up  
but he had to work  
to support his wife  
and children

as he worked tirelessly  
he entered into  
another world  
to what seemed to be  
his imagination at first

suddenly  
there in front of him  
was a stranger helping  
his very pregnant wife  
onto the hay  
why could they not  
find a place to stay  
in the town?  
maybe they did not  
have a lot of money?

he felt sorry  
for this young couple  
they seemed so young  
there was a weariness  
there was pain

written across their faces

for a moment  
samuel was glad  
he had come tonight  
because he wanted  
to help them  
so he walked over  
and as he did  
his heart missed a beat

when he looked  
into their faces  
he remembered back  
when he was this young  
before he had  
committed his crime  
when he was forced  
to be away from home

the young woman  
was ready to give birth  
and samuel was  
determined to help  
this young couple

my name is samuel  
i work here at this stable  
this young man named  
with long black hair  
and intense shining eyes  
offered his hand

my name is joseph  
we come from nazareth

all evening we have  
been going to places  
to see if we could find  
a place for my wife  
who will soon give birth  
the prices they were  
asking was too much  
we have so little money

the door was slammed  
in our faces  
over and over again

there seemed to be  
something else happening  
in this small cave  
i could not really put  
my finger on it at first  
he kept on telling me  
how something important  
was happening  
of course all fathers think  
the birth of their child  
is the most important event  
in the world

but it is just another birth

i remembered back  
to the birth of  
my own son moses  
tears came to my eyes  
how i missed him now  
and especially  
when i was locked up  
for so many years  
i missed the opportunities  
to be with him  
and watch him grow  
into a young man  
this humiliating job  
was the only one  
i could find  
because of  
my incarceration history  
how i missed my family  
right now

but i did not say anything  
there was nothing  
more important  
at this moment  
than the look on  
this woman's face as  
she stared into the eyes  
of her new baby  
a new beginning  
what would be the life  
of this mother and child?

i gently took  
the infant from  
this young woman  
named miriam and  
handed him to joseph  
his once weary face  
was transformed  
into pure joy  
then he handed  
the small one back  
into my arms

i was not expecting  
what happened  
something else was  
taking place in this shelter  
i did not know what  
but i felt this even stronger  
with this baby in my arms  
have you thought  
of a name to give this one

there was no hesitation  
there was no stumbling  
when they responded  
*his name will be jesus*  
mystery could hear

this name being echoed  
inside of me  
*his name will be jesus*

you have helped us samuel  
so i tell you  
this one in your arms  
will set us free  
this is the one  
long awaited by our people  
he continued  
you are the first to be lost  
in this mystery  
the one who made all  
has chosen not to be born  
in the large house  
in front of the synagogue  
or be waited on  
by many servants  
it is dark in here  
except for this small light  
from the fire  
but there is much light  
now in the world

jesus  
thank you for this hope  
being born within me  
you are giving me hope  
that soon i would be  
with my family

jesus  
i am glad i could be here  
on the first night  
of your breaking  
into our dark world

thank you for your light  
when i feel again  
that all is darkness  
i will remember back  
to this moment  
when i held you  
in my arms  
and gave me hope  
to not give up  
but to struggle  
to be reunited once again  
with my family  
thank you small one

thank you  
miriam and jose  
for allowing me  
to be here  
at this stable



**REFLECTION:** I remember asking Jesus for something special in my life on Christmas...  
I remember... I remember...

### **OUR FATHER**

Let us pray with confidence to the Father  
in the words our Savior gave us:  
**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy Kingdom come,  
thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against  
us, and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

**R. For the kingdom, the power and the  
glory are yours, now and for ever.  
Amen.**

### **SIGN OF PEACE**

Jesus, you said to your apostles: "I leave you  
peace, my peace I give you. Look not on our  
sins, but on the faith of your Church, and  
grant us the peace and unity of your kingdom  
where you live forever and ever. **Amen.**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**R. And with your spirit.**

### **LAMB OF GOD**

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
**have mercy on us.**  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
**have mercy on us.**  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
**grant us peace.**

This is Jesus, the Lamb of God, who takes away the  
sins of the world. Happy are we who are called to  
his supper.

**Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter  
under my roof, but only say the word and  
my soul shall be healed.**

### **COMMUNION**

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

Let us pray:  
Lord,  
As we celebrate your birth help us to spread the  
light that you have brought to us. Let the joy of  
Christmas remind us of our call to receive and  
share the love you have for us.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. **R. Amen.**

