

And here is a sign for you; you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger". The angels then sang "Glory to God in the highest heaven and peace to men of good will". So we have come they said to see what the angel had told us about. I was astonished at all this. I was deeply moved and looked lovingly at the baby; tears in my eyes. It was bright in the east as I shut the door, a new day was dawning. My practice of the Jewish faith was hit and miss - the Passover feast, Thanksgiving and Tabernacles – times when we all celebrated and had a good time. This baby was set to be a faithful, holy Jew and from now on I would try to be a faithful and hopefully holy Jewess.

-Kevin Hanrahan

Entrance antiphon: The Lord said to me: You are my Son. It is I who have begotten you this day.

First Reading: Isaiah 9: 1-7

Psalms 95: Response: Today a saviour has been born to us; he is Christ the Lord.

Second Reading: Titus 2: 11-14

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! I bring you news of great joy: Today a saviour has been born to us, Christ the Lord! Alleluia!

Gospel: Luke 2: 1-14

Memorial Acclamation: When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.



Communion Antiphon: The Word became flesh, and we have seen his glory.

"Today the darkness begins to grow shorter and the light to lengthen, as the hours of night become fewer... Realize that the true light is now here and, through the rays of the gospel, is illumining the whole earth."

- Gregory of Nyssa



Nativity of the Lord

Cycle A, 2023 Weekly Reflection: The Innkeeper. (The year of our Lord):

Sarah is my name. I run an inn in Bethlehem. A couple came by the other evening wanting to stay but I had no room in the inn. I was going to send them on their way

when I noticed that she was pregnant. I told them that they could bed down in the barn beside the inn. It wasn't so bad as the animals were out in the fields so there was plenty of straw for them to make a bed so they would be out of the weather. I left them to it.

That however was not to be the end of it and an eventful night lay before me. I had just retired for the night when there was a hammering on the door. It was Jo the husband – his wife was beginning to go into labour and would I help. I stirred the fire and then told him to see to it, got some swaddling clothes and helpful things and went into the barn. There she was, smiling one minute and grimacing with pain the next as contractions came. Quite frankly, there was not much I could do until baby came so I held her hand when she was hurting. She had the Jewish name Miriam (Mary) and was a lovely girl. She said she liked to call her husband Jo but his full name was Joseph. I could see by their prayerfulness that they were deeply Jewish and lived faithfully by the Jewish traditions. Eventually baby was coming and I helped cutting the chord and tidying baby up. I told them It was a boy and so they told me his name would be Jesus. They said the Birgal Hagomel as Joseph placed his hand on Jesus' head. It is the Jewish prayer of thanksgiving. "Blessed are you, Lord our God, Ruler of the World, who rewards the undeserving with goodness and who has rewarded us with goodness", then Miriam took Jesus to her breast.

As I was tidying up, two shepherds came rushing in and told us of an extraordinary event. They said an angel had appeared frightening them but the angel said "Do not be afraid. Listen! I bring you news of great joy. Today in the town of David a saviour has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord.