

## **OUTLINE FOR AN ONLINE CHILD-FRIENDLY PRAYER EVENT FOR CHRISTMAS EVE/DAY 2020**

### **Opening Hymn: Away in a Manger**

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.  
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,  
But little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.  
I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,  
And stay by my bedside till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay  
Close by me for ever and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,  
And fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

### **Sign of the Cross**

*(made slowly so that children and families at home can follow)*

**Word of Welcome:** On the first Christmas, the angel said to the shepherds:  
“I bring you news of a great joy, a joy to be shared by everyone.”  
Yes, the birth of Jesus brings God’s own happiness to our hearts.  
Welcome as we share this time together  
to thank God for sending us Jesus, the love who saves us.

*Invite someone to place the Christ child in the crib – perhaps the Christ child  
can be placed upon a large Bible opened up resting in the manger.*

**Blessing of the Crib** *(a prayer of blessing we ask God to extend to all the cribs  
of those who are watching and all those in our parish family)*

God, our true and tender Father,  
you gave us the amazing gift of Jesus your Beloved Son,  
born of the Virgin Mary in the town of Bethlehem.  
To our lives Jesus brings your peace, joy, kindness and forever love.  
Bless us ✠ and all who will look upon this crib.  
May the crib remind us how Jesus comes to us humbly and very simply.

Help us to give the humble and simple gift of ourselves this Christmas.  
Glory and praise to you, Lord our God,  
through Christ our Lord, **Amen.**

*(sprinkling with Holy Water)*

**OR:** Let us pray:

God, our true and tender Father,  
your beloved Son Jesus fills us with the light he brings to every human being.  
May the radiance of this love shine brightly in our hearts this Christmas  
in all we do and say. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**We now listen to God's word**

**Scripture Reading:**

**From the Gospel according to Luke (2:1, 3-14)**

The Roman emperor Caesar sent out an order for the names of all the people living in the Empire to be recorded in books. Everyone went to their home towns to be registered. Joseph left Nazareth, a town in Galilee and went to a town in Judea, called Bethlehem, the city of King David, because he was from David's family. He went there together with Mary, to whom he was engaged to be married.

Mary was pregnant and while they were in Bethlehem, the time came for Mary to have her baby. She gave birth to her first born son, Jesus, and wrapped him in warm clothes and laid him in the manger, because there was no room for them in the hotels.

Nearby, there were some shepherds who lived in the fields, watching over their sheep that night. The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone around them. The shepherds were terrified, but the angel said to them: "Do not be afraid! I bring you good news of a joy which is for all the people. Today, in the city of David is born a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in warm clothes and lying in a manger." And suddenly, with the angel were many other angels praising God and singing: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to people of goodwill."

### **Hymn in response to God's Word: Silent Night**

Silent night, holy night!  
All is calm, all is bright.  
Round yon Virgin, Mother and Child.  
Holy infant so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace,  
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!  
Shepherds quake at the sight.  
Glories stream from heaven afar  
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia,  
Christ the Saviour is born!  
Christ the Saviour is born.

Silent night, holy night!  
Son of God love's pure light.  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face  
With dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth  
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth

### **Intercessions:**

With hearts full of wonder and trust, we lift up our prayers to the Lord.

We thank you Lord for this beautiful feast of Christmas,  
and for the closeness of Jesus your Son to us. **Lord hear us**

We ask you Lord to bless our families with patience, kindness and joy in these  
holy days. **Lord hear us**

We will miss seeing people this year – people at Mass, some of our relations  
and our friends. We lift them up to you Lord and ask you to keep them safe in  
your love. **Lord hear us**

We thank you, Lord, for the people who were your hands and feet to us over  
the past nine months of Covid times: looking after those who were sick,  
keeping us safe, keeping shops and our schools and our churches open.  
Reward their goodness. **Lord hear us**

We pray for people who are sad this Christmas, because they are lonely,

or don't have a home, or are missing someone who has died.  
Help us to look after them. **Lord hear us**

We pray for those who have gone before us to God our Father's house. May they be praying with us and watching over us from heaven. **Lord hear us**

**Celebrant:**

We lift up these prayers and all those prayers we can't put into words into God our Father's hands as we pray: **Our Father...**

**Final Prayer:** Lord our God,  
at Christmas Jesus came as child of our human family  
so that we can belong to your family forever.  
Help us to live this good news  
and keep us safe in your love.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

[The Lord be with you. **And with your spirit**  
May almighty God bless and protect you:  
the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**]

Let us bless the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**Concluding Hymn: Joy to the world**

Joy to the world, the Lord is come  
Let earth receive her King.  
Let every heart prepare Him room  
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing  
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the world, the Saviour reigns  
Let all their songs employ  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy  
Repeat the sounding joy  
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.