Start in darkness with one candle lit on prayer focus

"Here I am to worship"

Tyler

Good afternoon and welcome to our special carol service, "Caritas in Bethlehem." Caritas is an ancient word with roots in both Latin and Greek which means love and charity. Today, we come together as a community to rejoice in the birth of Jesus and to explore the links between the Nativity story and Catholic Social Teaching which we use in school to help our words teach and our actions speak.

Opening Prayer Millie

 Dear Lord, we gather here today to celebrate the birth of Your Son, Jesus Christ, and to reflect on the teachings of love, compassion, and justice that guide us in our faith. May this service inspire us to live out these principles in our daily lives. Amen.

 (light other candles)

Adwoa M

Before we celebrate the birth of our Lord, we have the season of Advent. The word Advent comes from the Latin advenio, "to come to," and so Advent is a preparation time. Not only is it a time to reflect but also a time to act. As we light the Advent candles, let us remember that hope, peace, joy, and love are the foundations of our faith. Today, we will explore how these virtues are intricately woven into the story of the Nativity and the challenge for us to follow as we welcome the light of the world.

[Lighting of the Advent Wreath]

Gather Gather

Darcey Roberts

The Gift of Hope (Dignity of the Human Person): In the story of the Nativity, we witness the birth of Jesus, the ultimate gift of hope and love to the world. Jesus came to show us the dignity of every human person, regardless of their circumstances.

Daniel

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy God sent the angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee named Nazareth. **27**He had a message for a young woman promised in marriage to a man named Joseph, who was a descendant of King David. Her name was Mary. **28**The angel came to her and said, “Peace be with you! The Lord is with you and has greatly blessed you!”

“The angel Gabriel”

Annalee Numfor

“My heart praises the Lord;
**47**    my soul is glad because of God my Saviour,
**48**    for he has remembered me, his lowly servant!
From now on all people will call me happy,
**49**    because of the great things the Mighty God has done for me.
His name is holy;
**50**    from one generation to another
    he shows mercy to those who honour him.
**51**He has stretched out his mighty arm
    and scattered the proud with all their plans.
**52**He has brought down mighty kings from their thrones,
    and lifted up the lowly.
**53**He has filled the hungry with good things,
    and sent the rich away with empty hands.
**54**He has kept the promise he made to our ancestors,
    and has come to the help of his servant Israel.
**55**He has remembered to show mercy to Abraham
    and to all his descendants forever!”

"The Magnificat"

Jacob Cleary

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable and solidarity: When Mary and Joseph sought shelter in Bethlehem, they were turned away from the inns. This reminds us of the importance of caring for those who are marginalized or in need. In our world, we are called to stand with those who face adversity, just as the Holy Family did.

Lincoln Randall

At that time Emperor Augustus ordered a census to be taken throughout the Roman Empire. **2**When this first census took place, Quirinius was the governor of Syria. **3**Everyone, then, went to register himself, each to his own hometown.

Delilah

Joseph went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to the town of Bethlehem in Judea, the birthplace of King David. Joseph went there because he was a descendant of David. **5**He went to register with Mary, who was promised in marriage to him. She was pregnant, **6**and while they were in Bethlehem, the time came for her to have her baby. **7**She gave birth to her first son, wrapped him in cloths and laid him in a manger—there was no room for them to stay in the inn.

 "Away in a Manger"

Lizzie Kayode

Stewardship (Care for God's Creation): The stable where Jesus was born reminds us of the simplicity of His beginnings. It also calls us to be stewards of God's creation, to care for the Earth and all its creatures.

Shayla Gordon-Bedward

Promoting peace: The angels proclaimed "Peace on Earth" at Jesus' birth. This message calls us to work for peace and reconciliation in our world, extending our love and solidarity to all. We are called to be peacemakers, let us work to answer that call.

"Silent Night"

Carter R

Suddenly a great army of heaven's angels appeared with the angel, singing praises to God:

**14**“Glory to God in the highest heaven,
    and peace on earth to those with whom he is pleased!”

Option for the poor and participation: The shepherds were the first witnesses of the Nativity. They represent the often overlooked, the humble, and the poor. They also show how we all have a part to play in society and that we can all contribute to making the world a better place

Mila

**15**When the angels went away from them back into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us.”

Holly

**16**So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and saw the baby lying in the manger. **17**When the shepherds saw him, they told them what the angel had said about the child. **18**All who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said. **19**Mary remembered all these things and thought deeply about them. **20**The shepherds went back, singing praises to God for all they had heard and seen; it had been just as the angel had told them.

“Love Shone Down”

Tia

The common good: The Magi's journey from distant lands exemplifies the universal message of Christ's birth and is only told in Matthew’s Gospel. The travellers from the East teach us that God's love knows no bounds and challenges us to work for justice and peace on a global scale. This message of peace for all peoples of the world is greatly needed in these times of conflict and war.

Taylor Pritchard

On their way they saw the same star they had seen in the East. When they saw it, how happy they were, what joy was theirs! It went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. **11**They went into the house, and when they saw the child with his mother Mary, they knelt down and worshiped him. They brought out their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and presented them to him.

Philip

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, let us carry these lessons in our hearts. Through our actions, may we be a source of hope, compassion, and justice for all those we encounter. Amen

Ace

Loving God, we thank you for the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ. May this celebration inspire us in our daily lives. Help us to recognize your presence in the faces of our brothers and sisters, especially those in need. Amen.

Ava

 Heavenly Father, we thank you for the gift of Jesus and for the guiding principles of Catholic Social Teaching. May we be inspired to live out these teachings in our daily lives, bringing light to the world. In the words of St. Anthony, may our words teach and our actions speak. Amen.

Nonye O

Benediction: May the peace of Christ, born this day, dwell in our hearts forever. Go forth in love and compassion, spreading the joy of His Nativity to all. Amen.

“Oh Come All Ye Faithful”