

**January 1, 2023**  
**FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P Eternal Father, you gave your incarnate Son the holy name of Jesus to be a sign of our salvation. Plant in every heart the love of the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C Amen.**

**FIRST READING: Numbers 6:22-27**

*God commanded Aaron to say these words, known as the Aaronic benediction, in blessing the people of Israel. We too are marked with God's name and God's blessing as we are sent from our assemblies into the world.*

<sup>22</sup>The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>23</sup>Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the Israelites: You shall say to them,

<sup>24</sup>The Lord bless you and keep you;

<sup>25</sup>the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you;

<sup>26</sup>the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.

<sup>27</sup>So they shall put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.

**PSALM: Psalm 8**

*R How majestic is your name in all the earth! (Ps. 8:1)*

<sup>1</sup>O Lord our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth!—

<sup>2</sup>**you whose glory is chanted above the heavens out of the mouths of infants and children;**

**you have set up a fortress against your enemies, to silence the foe and avenger.**

<sup>3</sup>When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars you have set in their courses,

<sup>4</sup>**what are mere mortals that you should be mindful of them,  
human beings that you should care for them? R**

<sup>5</sup>Yet you have made them little less than divine;

with glory and honor you crown them.

**<sup>6</sup>You have made them rule over the works of your hands;  
you have put all things under their feet:**

<sup>7</sup>all flocks and cattle,

even the wild beasts of the field,

**<sup>8</sup>the birds of the air, the fish of the sea,  
and whatever passes along the paths of the sea.**

<sup>9</sup>O Lord our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth! **R**

## **SECOND READING: Galatians 4:4-7**

*Paul proclaims the ultimate significance of the nativity: Jesus was born the Son of God so that, because of him, we all may be God's children.*

<sup>4</sup>When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup>in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. <sup>6</sup>And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" <sup>7</sup>So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

## **GOSPEL: Luke 2:15-21**

*Eight days after his birth, Jesus is circumcised according to Jewish law and given the name announced by the angel before his conception.*

<sup>15</sup>When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

<sup>21</sup>After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P United with the great cloud of witnesses throughout the ages, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

*A brief silence.*

A Guide your church to confess that Jesus is Lord. Fill us with wonder at the good and saving news of Jesus. May we treasure your words and meditate upon them, that we reveal your glory to the world with humility and hope. Hear us, O God.

**C Your mercy is great.**

A Your name, O God, is majestic in all the earth. You set the moon and stars in their courses. You are mindful of every work of your hand: flocks and cattle, birds and fish, seas and fields. Make us wise stewards of your creation. Hear us, O God.

**C Your mercy is great.**

A Bless the nations with your grace and peace. Inspire and uphold treaties, cease-fires, and international agreements that seek to calm strife between nations. Shield all those who work to protect vulnerable populations from exploitation or danger. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

A We cry, "Abba! Father!" as we seek your loving care in times of need. Heal those wounded by hurtful words. Console all who are weighed down by depression and anxiety. Call by name any who feel unloved, misunderstood, or rejected. Heal the sick (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

**C Your mercy is great.**

A Reveal yourself to us in the fullness of time, O God. Give us gratitude for what has been and hope for what is to come. Grace us with your presence during transitions: new jobs or schools, new homes, new diagnoses, or new relationships. Hear us, O God.

**C Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

A With thanksgiving, we remember all the saints who proclaimed the name of Jesus in life and who now rest in glory. Show us our inheritance as adopted heirs of eternal life. Hear us, O God.

**C Your mercy is great.**

In the company of your saints we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your eternal mercy and love; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

**C Amen.**



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