



*St Thomas of  
Canterbury, the  
Parish Church for  
Brentwood*

# The Order of Mass

Holy Family Sunday

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> December 2025

*These prayers are suitable as preparation for Mass*

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen

*From the Book of Common Prayer*

Almighty and ever-living God, I approach the sacrament of Your only-begotten Son Our Lord Jesus Christ, I come sick to the doctor of life, unclean to the fountain of mercy, blind to the radiance of eternal light, and poor and needy to the Lord of heaven and earth. Lord, in your great generosity, heal my sickness, wash away my defilement, enlighten my blindness, enrich my poverty, and clothe my nakedness. May I receive the bread of angels, the King of kings and Lord of lords, with humble reverence, with the purity and faith, the repentance and love, and the determined purpose that will help to bring me to salvation. May I receive the sacrament of the Lord's Body and Blood, and its reality and power.

Kind God, may I receive the Body of Your only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, born from the womb of the Virgin Mary, and so be received into His mystical body and numbered among His members. Loving Father, as on my earthly pilgrimage I now receive Your beloved Son under the veil of a sacrament, may I one day see him face to face in glory, who lives and reigns with You for ever. Amen

*St Thomas Aquinas*

*It is our custom to keep a prayerful silence before Mass*

*We STAND when the bell rings. At 8 am, the sacred minister gathers before the image of Our Lady for the Angelus.*

The Angel of the Lord brought tidings to Mary,  
And she conceived by the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; Blessed art thou among  
women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus  
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the  
hour of our death.

Behold the handmaid of the Lord.  
Be it unto me according to thy Word.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; Blessed art thou among  
women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus  
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the  
hour of our death.

And the Word was made flesh,  
And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; Blessed art thou among  
women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus  
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the  
hour of our death.

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.  
That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray:

We beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts; that as we have  
known the Incarnation of thy Son, Jesus Christ, by the message of an angel,  
so by his ✕ Cross and Passion we may be brought to the glory of his  
resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*At 10 am, we sing the entrance hymn.*

The first Nowell the angel did say  
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
In fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,  
On a cold winter's night that was so deep:

*Refrain:*

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,  
Born is the King of Israel.*

They lookèd up and saw a star,  
Shining in the east, beyond them far:  
And to the earth it gave great light,  
And so it continued both day and night: *[Refrain]*

And by the light of that same star,  
Three Wise Men came from country far;  
To seek for a king was their intent,  
And to follow the star wheresoever it went: *[Refrain]*

This star drew nigh to the north-west;  
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest,  
And there it did both stop and stay  
Right over the place where Jesus lay: *[Refrain]*

Then entered in those Wise Men three,  
Full reverently upon their knee,  
And offered there in his presence  
Both gold and myrrh and frankincense: *[Refrain]*

Then let us all with one accord  
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord,  
That hath made heaven and earth of naught,  
And with his blood mankind hath bought: *[Refrain]*

**The Gathering**

✠ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.

The Lord be with you  
and also with you.

*The priest welcomes us and introduces the service.*

## Prayers of Penitence

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we have sinned against you and against our neighbour in thought and word and deed, through negligence, through weakness, through our own deliberate fault. We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who died for us, forgive us all that is past and grant that we may serve you in newness of life to the glory of your name. Amen

## Absolution

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you✠ pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord, have mercy.	Kyrie eleison
Lord, have mercy	Kyrie eleison
Christ, have mercy.	Christe eleison
Christ, have mercy	Christe eleison
Lord, have mercy.	Kyrie eleison
Lord, have mercy	Kyrie eleison

## Gloria in Excelsis

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King, Almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord, Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

### The Collect

*The Celebrant introduces a period of silent prayer with the words 'Let us pray':*

O God, who were pleased to give us the shining example of the Holy Family, graciously grant that we may imitate them in practising the virtues of family life and in the bonds of charity, and so, in the joy of your house, delight one day in eternal rewards. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

### THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

*SIT*

*Sirach 3:2–6, 12–14*

A reading from the book of Sirach.

The Lord honoured the father more than the children, and strengthened the judgment of the mother over her sons. Whoever honours his father atones for sins, and whoever glorifies his mother is like one who lays up treasure. Those who honour their father will have joy in their own children, and when they pray they will be heard. Those who respect their father will live a long life, and those who honour their mother obey the Lord. My child, help your father in his old age, and do not grieve him as long as he lives. Even if his mind fails, be patient with him; because you have all your faculties do not despise him. For kindness to a father will not be forgotten, and will be credited to you against your sins; in the day of your distress it will be remembered in your favour; like frost in fair weather, your sins will melt away.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*Today the psalm is said as below, and we join in with the response.*

R Blessed are all who fear the LORD, and walk in his ways.

Blessed are all who fear the LORD, and walk in his ways! By the labour of your hands you shall eat. You will be blessed and prosper. R

Your wife like a fruitful vine in the heart of your house; your children like shoots of the olive around your table. R

Indeed thus shall be blessed the husband who fears the LORD. May the LORD bless you from Sion. May you see Jerusalem prosper all the days of your life! R

*Colossians 3:12–21*

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians.

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**Gospel Reading**

*We STAND to greet the gospel.*

Alleluia, alleluia, (alleluia.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.)

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory.

Alleluia, (alleluia, alleluia.)

The Lord be with you  
And also with you.

✠ Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St Matthew.  
Glory to you, O Lord.

*Matthew 2:13–end*

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, ‘Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.’ Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, ‘Out of Egypt I have called my son.’ When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: ‘A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.  
Praise to you, O Christ.

*We SIT for the sermon.*

The Sermon

*A sermon will be preached.*

The Creed

*We STAND to proclaim the Creed.*

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being



with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

*We BOW as we proclaim the Mystery of the Incarnation.*

WAS INCARNATE FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT  
AND THE VIRGIN MARY AND WAS MADE MAN.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

### Prayers of Intercession – Universal Prayers

*We SIT or KNEEL for the prayers of intercession, after each petition we respond:*

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer

*Or*

Lord hear us,

Lord graciously hear us.

*The intercessor may conclude the prayer for the faithful departed with;*

Rest eternal grant to them O Lord

And let light perpetual shine upon them.

May they rest in peace Amen

The prayers may conclude with a collect to which all respond: Amen.

Or, by us saying together;

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

### The Peace

*We STAND as the Celebrant introduces the Peace:*

Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and his name shall be called  
the Prince of Peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Let us offer one another the sign of peace.

## THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

### The Offertory

*A collection is taken at this celebration. If you don't have cash or are not part of our planned giving scheme and would like to support the ministry costs of St Thomas' please scan the QR code on the back of the chair in front of you, to be taken to the online donations page where you can easily donate to support the work of St Thomas' and complete the details allowing the reclamation of Gift Aid on your donation.*

*At 10 am, we STAND to sing this hymn while the altar is prepared.*

In the bleak midwinter  
Frosty wind made moan,  
Earth stood hard as iron,  
Water like a stone:  
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,  
Snow on snow,  
In the bleak midwinter,  
Long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold him  
Nor earth sustain;  
Heaven and earth shall flee away  
When he comes to reign:  
In the bleak midwinter  
A stable place sufficed  
The Lord God Almighty,  
Jesus Christ.

Enough for him, whom Cherubim  
Worship night and day,  
A breastful of milk,  
And a mangerful of hay:  
Enough for him, whom angels  
Fall down before,  
The ox and ass and camel  
Which adore.

Angels and archangels  
May have gathered there,  
Cherubim and Seraphim  
Thronged the air  
But only his mother  
In her maiden bliss  
Worshipped the Beloved  
With a kiss.

What can I give him,  
Poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd  
I would bring a lamb;  
If I were a wise man  
I would do my part;  
Yet what I can I give him  
Give my heart

*Christina Rossetti, 1830-94*

## The Preparation of the Altar

*At 8 am, as the celebrant takes the bread and the wine, we pray;*

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation: through your goodness we have this bread to offer, which earth has given and human hands have made. It will become for us the bread of life.

Blessed be God for ever.

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation: through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit of the vine and work of human hands. It will become our spiritual drink.

Blessed be God for ever.

*At 10 am, we STAND to be censed, at 8am we STAND as the Priest says;*

Pray, my brothers and sisters, that this my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the almighty Father.

May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good, and the good of all his Church.

We offer you, Lord, the sacrifice of conciliation, humbly asking that, through the intercession of the Virgin Mother of God and Saint Joseph, you may establish our families firmly in your grace and your peace. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## The Preface

The Lord be with you  
and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere,  
mighty creator, ever-living God.

We give you thanks and praise for your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
who for love of our fallen race humbled himself,

and was born of the Virgin Mary  
by the power of your Spirit, and lived as one of us.  
In this mystery of the Word made flesh  
you have caused his light to shine in our hearts,  
to give knowledge of your glory in the face of Jesus Christ.  
In him we see our God made visible  
and so are caught up in the love of the God we cannot see.  
Therefore with all the angels of heaven  
we lift our voices to proclaim the glory of your name  
and sing our joyful hymn of praise:

*We remain STANDING as we say/sing the Sanctus and the Benedictus:*

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and  
earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

✠ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.

*We KNEEL after the Sanctus and Benedictus.*

Lord, you are holy indeed, the source of all holiness; grant that by the power  
of your Holy Spirit, and according to your holy will, these gifts of bread and  
wine may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;

who, in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread and gave you  
thanks; he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me. ✠

In the same way, after supper he took the cup and gave you thanks; he gave  
it to them, saying:

Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed  
for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you  
drink it, in remembrance of me. ✠

*After the consecration, the following acclamation is said/sung:*

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:  
Christ has died:  
Christ is risen:  
Christ will come again.

And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross, his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins of the whole world; rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension, and looking for his coming in glory, we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.

As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, we bring before you this bread and this cup and we thank you for counting us worthy to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send the Holy Spirit on your people and gather into one in your kingdom all who share this one bread and one cup, so that we, in the company of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St Joseph her spouse, St Thomas of Canterbury and all the saints, may praise and glorify you for ever, through Jesus Christ our Lord;

by whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father, for ever and ever. Amen

## COMMUNION RITE

As our Saviour taught and commanded us we are bold to say:

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. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.  
Though we are many, we are one body,  
because we all share in one bread.

### *We sing the Agnus Dei:*

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.

### *The Celebrant invites the people to communion*

Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word,  
and I shall be healed.

*Please follow the direction of the celebrant and sidespersons to come forward and receive communion. Those who are confirmed are welcome to make their communion at our celebration today. Otherwise, please come forward for a blessing with your hands crossed across your chest. The response after receiving a blessing is Amen.*

### **Communion Hymn**

*We SIT or KNEEL to sing the following hymn.*

Unto us a boy is born!  
King of all creation,  
Came he to a world forlorn,  
The Lord of every nation.

Cradled in a stall was he  
With sleepy cows and asses;  
But the very beasts could see  
That he all men surpasses.

Herod then with fear was filled:  
'A prince,' he said, 'in Jewry!'  
And all the little boys he killed  
At Bethlem in his fury.

Now may Mary's son, who came  
So long ago to love us,  
Lead us all with hearts aflame  
Unto the joys above us.

Omega and Alpha he!  
Let the organ thunder,  
While the choir with peals of glee  
Doth rend the air asunder.

### Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament. I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there, and I unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

*St Alphonsus Liguori*

### Post Communion

*We STAND as the priest leads the post-communion prayers:*

Bring those you refresh with this heavenly Sacrament, most merciful Father, to imitate constantly the example of the Holy Family, so that, after the trials of this world, we may share their company for ever. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ. Through him we offer you our souls and bodies to be a living sacrifice. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.

### Banns and Notices

*We SIT while any Banns of Marriage are published, and brief notices are given out. We STAND for the final blessing and dismissal.*



## Blessing and Dismissal

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Bow your heads and pray for God's blessing

May the Father, who has loved the eternal Son from before the foundation of the world, shed that love upon you, his children.

Amen.

May Christ, who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with joy and peace.

Amen.

May the Holy Spirit, by whose overshadowing Mary became the God-bearer, give you grace to carry the good news of Christ.

Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, ✠ the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

The Mass is ended, go in the peace of Christ,

Thanks be to God.

## The Angelus

*At 10 am, the sacred ministers gather before the image of Our Lady for the Angelus.*

The Angel of the Lord brought tidings to Mary,

And she conceived by the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.

Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

Be it unto me according to thy Word.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus  
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.

And the Word was made flesh,  
And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus  
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.  
That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray:

We beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts; that as we have known the Incarnation of thy Son, Jesus Christ, by the message of an angel, so by his ✕ Cross and Passion we may be brought to the glory of his resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*The sacred ministers leave during the organ voluntary.*

## Private Devotions during Communion or after Mass

We do not presume to come to this thy table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table. But thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy: grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

*From the Book of Common Prayer*

ALMIGHTY God, Father of all mercies, we thine unworthy servants do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all men; [\*particularly to those who desire now to offer up their praises and thanksgivings for thy late mercies vouchsafed unto them.] We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And we beseech thee, give us that due sense of all thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we shew forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives; by giving up ourselves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

*\*This to be said when any that have been prayed for desire to return praise.*

*From the Book of Common Prayer*

Soul of Christ, sanctify me  
body of Christ, save me  
blood of Christ, inebriate me  
water from Christ's side, wash me  
passion of Christ, strengthen me.

O good Jesus, hear me  
within thy wounds hide me.  
Suffer me not to be separated from thee.

From the malicious enemy defend me.

In the hour of my death call me and bid me come unto thee that I may praise thee with thy saints and with thy angels forever and ever. Amen

Hail holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope! To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn then, O most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

*The Salve Regina*

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