

THE PARISH OF SAINT PAUL DEPTFORD



The Diocese of Southwark

'anglo-catholic, inclusive, committed to prayer & justice.'

<http://www.achurchnearyou.com/deptford-st-paul>

The Rector & Parish Priest: Fr Paul Butler

tel: 0208 6927449 email: stpaulsdeptford@btinternet.com

Welcome to S. Paul's today in church or on Zoom.
Please follow the directions of the Churchwardens & Welcomers.



Please turn off mobile phones.

No form of visual or sound recording, or any form of photography is permitted during or after the services, without express permission. Thank you for your co-operation.



WCs (& baby changing facilities) downstairs in the crypt.

Do not attend if you have Covid, symptoms, or a cold.

Please let a Welcomer know if you require a **Gluten Free Host**.
'Love one another as I have loved you', says the Lord.



Churchwardens: Ms Lavern Ford & Mr Andrew Taylor
Organist: Mr Ian Bhullar

CHRISTMASS EVE 24th December 2025

MASS during the NIGHT

'Midnight Mass' a little earlier

9.00pm

Celebrant & Preacher: The Rector



In this Liturgy of Midnight Mass:

1. The Procession goes to the Crib to bless and hallow it. The Crib symbolises the waiting world and our hearts waiting to receive Him. Our hearts are prepared by the gift of contrition for sin and made ready by 'repentance', which means 'turning around', a change of perspective or mindset so that we are orientated towards God and his ways and free to be our true selves.

2. The Solemn Mass follows with Holy Communion: God's communion with us is solemnly celebrated and received.

3. After the Dismissal, the Image of the Infant Christ is brought from the High Altar and placed in the Crib at the words: **'And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us'**. Thus, it is brought home to us that God is truly Emmanuel, God with us, in our story, at the centre of all time and space. The Crib becomes a focus for our devotions and prayers for Christmas and Epiphany-tide until the Feast of Candlemass (2nd February).

SPECIAL NOTICE

Please enter and leave the church by the main West Doors.

If you require any assistance, please speak to either of the Churchwardens, or one of the Sidespersons, (wearing red S. Paul's, Deptford lanyards.)

DANGER! BEWARE!
DO NOT WALK ON THE STONWORK
AROUND THE CHURCH.

The Parochial Church Council will not accept any liability for your accident, or injuries that may occur, if you fail to heed this warning.

The Stonework outside and around the church, including the stone pavements, terraces and staircases, can be slippery when wet and/or icy. If you do wander around the church stonework during the Mass this will be at your own risk and responsibility.

Please join in with the Bold Type

Mass Setting: Mass of St Thomas by David Thorne

¶ THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Stand

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

Throughout the season of Advent, the Church has reflected on God's promises, so often spoken by the prophets, to send a saviour to the people of Israel who would be Emmanuel, that is, God with us. In the fullness of time those promises were fulfilled. With hearts full of joy let us listen to the proclamation of our Saviour's birth.

'The twenty-fifth day of December, when ages beyond number had run their course from the creation of the world, when God in the beginning created heaven and earth, and formed humankind in his own likeness; when century upon century had passed since the Almighty set his bow in the clouds after the Great Flood, as a sign of covenant and peace; in the twenty-first century since Abraham, our father in faith, came out of Ur of the Chaldees; in the thirteenth century since the People of Israel were led by Moses in the Exodus from Egypt; around the thousandth year since David was anointed King; in the sixty-fifth week of the prophecy of Daniel; in the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad; in the year seven hundred and fifty-two since the foundation of the City of Rome; in the forty-second year of the reign of Caesar Octavian Augustus, when the fullness of time had come to bring peace to the earth JESUS CHRIST, eternal God and Son of the eternal Father, desiring to consecrate the world by his most loving presence, was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and when nine months had passed since his conception, was born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem of Judah, and was made human.'

The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh.

Entrance Antiphon

Welcome all wonders in one sight!

Eternity shut in a span.

Summer in winter, day in night,

heaven in earth and God in man.

Great little one whose all-embracing birth

brings earth to heaven, stoops heaven to earth.

From 'In the Holy Nativity of our Lord' by Richard Crashaw

Let us go forth in peace,
in the name of Christ, Amen.

PROCESSIONAL CAROL

Words: Cecil Frances Alexander. Tune: Irby

Bambino carried by celebrant.

1. Once in royal David's city
stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.

2. He came down to earth from heaven
who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable,
and his cradle was a stall;
with the poor and mean and lowly
lived on earth our Saviour holy.

3. And through all his wondrous childhood
he would honour and obey,
love and watch the lowly maiden,
in whose gentle arms he lay:
Christian children all must be
mild, obedient, good as he.

4. For he is our childhood's pattern,
day by day like us he grew,
he was little, weak, and helpless,
tears and smiles like us he knew;
and he feeleth for our sadness,
and he shareth in our gladness.

5. And our eyes at last shall see him,
through his own redeeming love,
for that child so dear and gentle
is our Lord in heaven above;
and he leads his children on
to the place where he is gone.

6. Not in that poor lowly stable,
with the oxen standing by,
we shall see him; but in heaven,
set at God's right hand on high;
where like stars his children crowned
all in white shall wait around.

Remain standing

The Greeting

✠ 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 Introduction to the Mass

The celebrant welcomes the people and introduces the Mass.

The Blessing of the Crib

Dear friends, as we meet to celebrate the birth of Christ,
let us pray that God will bless this crib,
that all who worship his Son, born of the Virgin Mary,
may come to share his life in glory.

Let us pray.
God our Father, on this night your Son Jesus Christ
was born of the Virgin Mary for us and for our salvation;
bless ✠ this crib which we have prepared
to celebrate that holy birth;
may all who see it be strengthened in faith,
and receive the fullness of life
he came to bring; who is alive and reigns for ever. **Amen.**

Crib is sprinkled with Holy Water & then censed.

Prayers of Penitence

Sisters and brothers, to prepare ourselves to celebrate
the sacred mysteries, let us call to mind and confess our sins.

The Confiteor

**I confess to almighty God,
and to you, my brothers and sisters,
that I have greatly sinned,
in my thoughts and in my words,
in what I have done,
and in what I have failed to do;**
(*And, striking their breast, they say:*)
**through my fault, through my fault,
through my most grievous fault;**
(*Then they continue:*)
**therefore I ask blessed Mary, ever virgin,
all the angels and saints,
and you, my brothers and sisters,
to pray for me to the Lord, our God. Amen.**

The celebrant pronounces the 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.

The Kyrie Eleison

**Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.**

Gloria in Excelsis

**Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to God in the highest.
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.**

**Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to God in the highest.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.**

**Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to God in the highest.
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.**

Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to God in the highest.

The Collect

Let us pray in the peace of this Christmas celebration
that our joy in the birth of Christ will last for ever.

Silence is kept.

Eternal God,
who made this most holy night
to shine with the brightness of your one true light:
bring us, who have known the revelation of that light on earth,
to see the radiance of your heavenly glory;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

¶ THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Sit for the readings.

First Reading from the Old Testament

A reading from the prophet Isaiah (9: 2-7)

² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness - on them light has shined. ³ You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴ For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵ For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶ For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onwards and for evermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 96

**R. / To you is born this day,
a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.**

¹ Sing to the LORD a new song;
sing to the LORD, all the whole earth.

² Sing to the LORD and bless his Name;
proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.

³ Declare his glory among the nations
and his wonders among all peoples. **R./**

⁴ For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised;
he is more to be feared than all gods.

⁵ As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols;
but it is the LORD who made the heavens.

⁶ O, the majesty and magnificence of his presence!
O, the power and the splendour of his sanctuary! **R./**

⁷ Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples;
ascribe to the LORD honour and power.

⁸ Ascribe to the LORD the honour due his Name;
bring offerings and come into his courts.

⁹ Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness;
let the whole earth tremble before him. **R./**

¹⁰ Tell it out among the nations: "The LORD is King! he has made the world so firm that it cannot be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity."

¹¹ Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein. **R./**

¹² Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy before the Lord when he comes, when he comes to judge the earth.

¹³ He will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with his truth. **R./**

Second Reading from the New Testament
A reading from the Letter of S. Paul to Titus. (2: 11-14)

¹¹ The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹² training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴ He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Stand & turn to face the Gospel

Gospel Acclamation and Reading

♪ Alleluia! I bring you news of great joy:

Today a Saviour has been born to us, Christ the Lord. **♪ Alleluia**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

¶ A reading from ♫ Holy Gospel according to ♫ S. Luke (2: 1-20)
Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. ⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see - I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!' ¹⁵ 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.' ¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The Homily

Stand

Niceno-Constantinopolitan 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, (Genuflect) was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made human. (Rise)

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 ♫ age to come. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Celebrant

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

The Response to Holy God, is, **hear our prayer.**

Intercessor 1

Father, in this holy night your Son our Saviour was born in human flesh. Renew your Church as the Body of Christ. Holy God.

Intercessor 2

In this holy night there was no room for your Son in the inn. Protect with your love those who have no home and all who live in poverty. Holy God.

Intercessor 3

In this holy night Mary, in the pain of labour, brought your Son to birth. Hold in your hand all who are in pain or distress. Holy God.

Intercessor 4

In this holy night your Christ came as a light shining in the darkness. Bring comfort to all who suffer in the sadness of our world. Holy God.

Intercessor 5

In this holy night the angels sang, 'Peace to God's people on earth.' Strengthen those who work for peace and justice in all the world. Holy God.

Intercessor 6

In this holy night shepherds in the field heard good tidings of joy. Give us grace to preach the gospel of Christ's redemption. Holy God.

Intercessor 7

In this holy night strangers found the Holy Family, and saw the baby lying in the manger. Bless our homes and all whom we love. Holy God.

Intercessor 8

In this holy night heaven is come down to earth, and earth is raised to heaven. Hold in your hand all those who have passed through death in the hope of your coming kingdom.

¶ Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord.

and let light perpetual shine upon them.

May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

Intercessor 9

In this holy night Christians the world over celebrate Christ's birth. Open our hearts that he may be born in us today. Holy God

The celebrant invites us to offer our personal intentions, And then leads us in asking for the Prayers of our Lady & the Saints.

Father, in this holy night angels and shepherds worshipped at the manger throne. Receive the worship we offer in fellowship with the Blessed Virgin Mary, as we pray:

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. Amen.

S. Joseph, Spouse of the BVM, **Pray for us.** Holy Shepherds

S. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, S. Paul, our Patron

S. Paul the Apostle, our Patron, S. Joseph of Nazareth

S. Elizabeth & S. Zechariah, S. John the Baptist

S. Augustine & S. Monica, S. Benedict & S. Scholastica

S. Francis & S. Clare of Assisi, All you angels and saints.

Merciful God **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, Our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Remain standing

¶ THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

The Altar is prepared

THE OFFERTORY CAROL

Words: Charles Wesley. Tune: Mendelssohn

I. Hark! the herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born King,
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim,
'Christ is born in Bethlehem.'

**Hark! the herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born King.**

2. Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!
Hail, the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.

Hark...

3. Hail, the heaven-born Prince of peace!
Hail, the sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise the sons of earth,
born to give them second birth.

Hark...

Orate Fratres

Pray my sisters and brothers, that 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.**

Prayer over the Offerings

May the oblation of this day's feast be pleasing to you,
O Lord, we pray, that through this most holy exchange
we may be found in the likeness of Christ,
in whom our nature is united to you.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Remain standing

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

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 thanks and praise.

*Here follows the Preface in which the celebrant praises God for his mighty acts,
and all respond:*

**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.**

The celebrant recalls the Last Supper, and this acclamation is used:

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died: Christ is risen: Christ will come again.

The Prayer continues and leads into the doxology, to which all respond boldly:

AMEN.

¶ THE COMMUNION RITE

Remain standing

The Lord's Prayer

Rejoicing in the presence of God here among us,
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

**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.**

The celebrant adds,

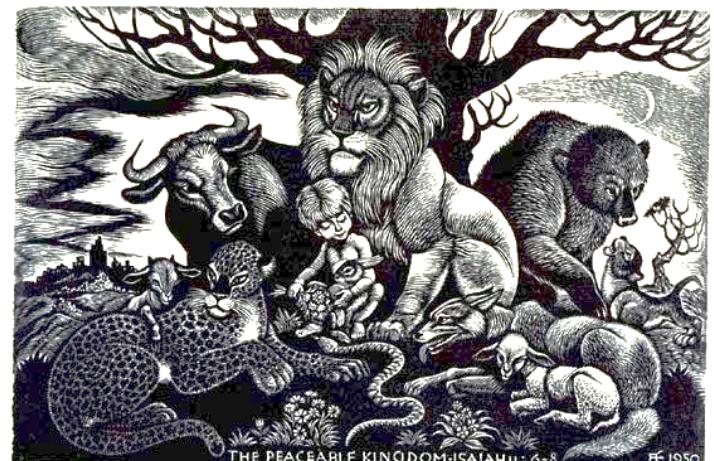
*Deliver us, Lord, from every evil, and grant us peace in our day.
In your mercy keep us free from sin and protect us from all distress
as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.*

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

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles:
Peace I leave you, my peace I give you.
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,
and grant us the peace and unity of your kingdom
where you live for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**
Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

*We share the peace by bowing to those immediately around us,
a sign that expresses peace, communion, and love.*



Agnus Dei

*during which the celebrant takes the host and breaks it over the paten,
placing a small piece in the chalice.*

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Giving of 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.**

Communion Antiphon

The Word became flesh and we have seen his glory.

S. John 1: 14

Please follow the directions of the sidespeople.

The Body / Blood of Christ.

The communicant replies each time:

Amen.

and then receives.

* At home, make an 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.

(S. Alphonsus Liguori)

At your feet, O my Jesus, I prostrate myself and I offer you
repentance of my contrite heart, which is humbled in its nothingness
and in your holy presence. I adore you in the Sacrament of your love,
the ineffable Eucharist. I desire to receive you into the poor dwelling
that my heart offers you. While waiting for the happiness of sacramental
communion, I wish to possess you in spirit. Come to me, O my Jesus,
since I, for my part, am coming to you! May your love embrace my
whole being in life and in death. I believe in you, I hope in you, I love
you. Amen.

(Cardinal Rafael Merry del Val)

*As you imagine yourself receiving the Bread of Heaven, be still and rest in the love of
God. Thank Him for entering beneath the roof of your soul.*

COMMUNION CAROL

Words: Fr Joseph Mohr. Tune: Stille Nacht

1. 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.

2. Silent night, holy night,
shepherds first saw the sight:
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing alleluia:
Christ the Saviour is born,
Christ the Saviour is born!

3. Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light;
radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

After receiving Holy Communion read & pray quietly in thanksgiving.

THE JESUS PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ,
Son of God,
have mercy on me, a sinner.

THE TRISAGION (Thrice Holy)

Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy and Immortal,
Have mercy on us. (x3)

Dietrich Bonhoeffer,

Pastor, Theologian, anti-fascist, Martyr (1906 - 9 April 1945)

God Is In the Manger

Quotes from sermons given in London in December 1933

"No powerful person dares to approach the manger, and this even includes King Herod. For this is where thrones shake, the mighty fall, the prominent perish, because God is with the lowly. Here the rich come to nothing, because God is with the poor and hungry, but the rich and satisfied he sends away empty. Before Mary, the maid, before the manger of Christ, before God in lowliness, the powerful come to naught; they have no right, no hope; they are judged. . . ."

"Who among us will celebrate Christmas correctly? Whoever finally lays down all power, all honour, all reputation, all vanity, all arrogance, all individualism beside the manger; whoever remains lowly and lets God alone be high; whoever looks at the child in the manger and sees the glory of God precisely in his lowliness. Who says with Mary: 'The Lord has been mindful of my humble state. My soul magnifies the Lord and rejoices in God my Saviour'."

"And that is the wonder of all wonders, that God loves the lowly . . . God is not ashamed of the lowliness of human beings. God marches right in. He chooses people as his instruments and performs his wonders where one would least expect them. God is near to lowliness; he loves the lost, the neglected, the unseemly, the excluded, the weak and broken."

"I believe that God can and will bring good out of evil, even out of the greatest evil. For that purpose, he needs men [and women] who make the best use of everything. I believe that God will give us all the strength we need to help us to resist in all times of distress. But he never gives it in advance, lest we should rely on ourselves and not on him alone. A faith such as this should allay all our fears for the future."

THE CONCLUDING RITES

Stand

Postcommunion Prayer

God our Father,
in this night you have made known to us again
the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:
confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him
until the day dawns and Christ the Morning Star rises in our hearts.
To him be glory both now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Solemn Blessing

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Let us bow our 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 Dismissal



RECESSATIONAL CAROL

Words: Latin, possibly by John Francis Wade,
& English trans: Frederick Oakeley
Tune: Adeste Fidelis

*The Bambino, the image of the infant Christ,
is taken from the High Altar in procession to the crib.*

1. O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him, born the King of angels;

Refrain
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord! [Dominum]

2. God of God, Light of Light,
lo, he abhors not the virgin's womb;
very God, begotten, not created:
Refrain

3. See how the shepherds summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks, draw nigh to gaze;
we too will thither bend our joyful footsteps:
Refrain

4. Child, for us sinners, poor and in the manger,
fain we embrace thee with love and awe;
who would not love thee, loving us so dearly?
Refrain

5. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing all ye citizens of heaven above:
"Glory to God in the highest:"
Refrain

The Procession arrives at the crib.

Remain standing

The Last Gospel

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

The ☩ beginning of the Holy ☩ Gospel according to ☩ John.
Glory to you, O Lord

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of a man, but of God.

All Kneel

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt amongst us,

*The Bambino is placed in the Crib and censed,
and the candle is lighted.*

Rise

and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Final verse of the Recessional Carol

6. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesu, to thee be glory given:
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:

Refrain

Organ Voluntary

**The Rector and Churchwardens, on behalf of
everyone at S. Paul's, Deptford, wish you a
very blessed and joyful Christmas!**

THE COLLECTION OF MONEY

is taken for the Mission & Ministry of the Church.

Please see the **Financial Information** section in the **Notices** on the back page of this Mass Sheet for further information about giving to S. Paul's. Contactless payment and Yellow envelopes are provided for the gifts of **visitors**. Please fill in the front of the envelope or enter the details on the machine so that we can claim Gift Aid on your offering.

Regular members of S. Paul's should be giving by Direct Debit, or be part of the parish envelope scheme.

Please see the Churchwardens or Hon. Treasurer for further details.

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Front page: Christmas for the Catholic Worker Newspaper, Vol XXI No. 5, 1954;
At the Peace: 'The Peaceable Kingdom' (1950), Catholic Worker Newspaper Vol. XXII No. 5 (1955).

THE KALENDAR

CHRISTMASS OCTAVE

MASS & Other Service Times in church

THURS, 25th, CHRISTMASS DAY, Mass 10.30am, EP 6pm
FRI, 26th, S. Stephen, Protomartyr, Mass 10am, EP 6pm
SAT, 27th, S. John the Evangelist, Mass 10am, EP 6pm

DAILY OFFICE: MP = Morning Prayer, EP = Evening Prayer

28th DECEMBER 2025

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

1st SUNDAY of CHRISTMASS

MORNING PRAYER at 9am

PARISH MASS SUNG at 10.30am

Celebrant & Preacher: The Rector

EVENING PRAYER, *Holy Innocents*, at 5pm

MON, 29th, S. Thomas Becket, No Public Liturgies

TUES, 30th, 6th Day in Christmass Octave, Mass 10.00am, EP 6pm

WEDS, 31st, S. Sylvester, Mass 10.00am, EP 6pm

THURS, 1st JANUARY 2026, NEW YEAR'S DAY,

NAMING & CIRCUMCISION OF JESUS, Mass 10.00am, EP 6pm

FRI, 2nd, Ss. Basil & Gregory Nazianzus, EP 6pm

THE NOTICES

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION at PARISH MASS

Sunday, 15th February 2026.

Please also let Fr Paul know if you are interested in
HOLY BAPTISM &/or in **HOLY CONFIRMATION**

Ω S. PAUL'S OMEGA STUDY GROUP Ω

Meets some Thursdays, 8.30 - 10pm on Zoom.

Next date to be agreed. All welcome.

Info & login details on Parish website & the Rector's Weekly Email.
Open to ideas as to what we might read and discuss in 2026.

Church Cleaning on Saturday after Mass until 12.30pm.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

'The Lord loves a cheerful giver.'

The Church, based upon biblical teaching, asks every Christian to give a Tithe, 10% of their time, talents & money to God's work, and recommends that members contribute 5% of their income to their church. **E.g. If you earn:** £5000 a year or, £96 a week = Give £5 a week to S. Paul's. £10000 a year, £192 a week = £10 a week. £20000 a year, £385 a week = £20 a week. £25000 a year, £480 a week = £25 a week. £30000 a year, £577 a week = £30 a week. Over the year our costs run to almost £1,000 a week. We receive no external subsidies, and all monies must be raised from the parishioners, through lettings, or voluntary donations. **Thank you** for all financial contributions which help to pay for: - the: Utility bills of the church, (gas, electricity, water) - Costs of maintaining the worship, (e.g. candles, wine, wafers, incense) - Maintenance, cleaning, & repair of our Grade I Listed church, (substantial costs) - Office costs (e.g. postage, printing, paper) - Monthly Diocesan Parish Share to the Diocese, (80p out of every £1 we give to the Diocese goes towards clergy stipends).

We ask everyone, who can, to please give via Direct Debit, Standing Order, or, via the Weekly Envelope Scheme.

GIVING VIA DIRECT DEBIT: Please see the **PARISH GIVING SCHEME**

information leaflet and Direct Debit Form, on the Parish Website.
ONLINE GIVING: Our **Give A Little** page is available on our website, via the **Donate** button, or here: <https://bit.ly/spd-giving>

✖ FURTHER INFORMATION & UPDATES ✖

On the **Parish Website**, **Church Noticeboard** (churchyard forecourt) & **Subscribe to the Rector's Weekly Email** directly from the link on the website or by sending an email to:

stpaulsdeptford@btinternet.com

sent every Friday via MailChimp (GDPR compliant)