CHRISTMAS
MIDNIGHT MASS
2020
CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

His Eminence
TimoTHY MiCHAEL CaRDINAL DolAN
ARCHBISHOP OF New YoRK
CELEBRANT

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD
CHRISTMAS
MASS DURING THE NIGHT

ST. PaTRICK’S CATHERDAL
“AMERICA’S PARISH CHURCH”
NEW YoRK CITY

DECEMBER 25, 2020
MIDNIGHT
The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ from the Roman Martyrology

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 man 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,
the whole world being at peace,

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 man:

The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh.
Principal Celebrant
His Eminence, Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan, Archbishop of New York

Concelebrants
Reverend Monsignor Robert T. Ritchie, Rector, St. Patrick’s Cathedral
Reverend Monsignor Joseph LaMorte, Vicar General, Archdiocese of New York
Reverend Edward Dougherty, MM
Reverend Donald Haggerty
Bishops and Priests Present

Masters of Ceremonies
Reverend Stephen Ries
Reverend Andrew King
Reverend Arthur Golino

Deacon
Deacon James Anthony Bello

Lectors
Peter Fitton
Paola Villagra

Intercession Readers
Alessandro Ventura (Italian)
Gabriele Pietz-Vogel (German)
Nancy Dorsinville (Creole)
Ifeoma Ikemefune-Fejokwu (Igbo)
Tina Francesca Hollman (Chinese)
A.J. Ojeda-Pons (Spanish)
Victoria Baxa (Tagalog)

Music Ministry
Jennifer Pascual, DMA, Director of Music
Daniel Brondel, Associate Director of Music
Michael Hey, Associate Director of Music
Mark Heimbigner, Cantor
St. Patrick’s Cathedral Choir Schola
Matthew Gasiorowski, Trumpet
Andrew Kemp, Trumpet
Benjamin Herman, Percussion
Isabel Leonard, Guest Soloist
Prelude Concert
(11:00 P.M.)

Carol of the Bells
Mykola Leontovich
arr. Peter J. Wilhousky

Hark! how the bells; Sweet silver bells,
All seem to say “throw cares away”
Christmas is here Bringing good cheer
To young and old, Meek and the bold
Ding, dong, ding, dong, That is their song, With joyful ring All caroling.
One seems to hear, Words of good cheer,
From everywhere Filling the air
O, how they pound, Raising the sound,
O’er hill and dale, Telling their tale,
Gayly they ring, While people sing
song of good cheer, Christmas is here!
Merry Christmas! On they send,
on without end their joyful tone to every home.

Gaudete
arr. Robert J. Batastini
verses Joseph S. Cook

Rejoice, Christ is born of the Virgin Mary.
Gentle Mary laid her child Lowly in a manger;
There he lay, the undefiled, To the world a stranger.
Such a babe in such a place, Can he be the Savior?
Ask the saved of all the race Who have found his favor.
Angels sang about his birth, Wise men sought and found him.
Heaven’s star shone brightly forth, Glory all around him!
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight, Heard the angels singing.
All the plains were lit that night; All the hills were ringing.
Gentle Mary laid her child Lowly in a manger;
He is still the undefiled, But no more a stranger.
Song of God of humble birth, Beautiful the story!
Praise his name in all the earth, Hail the King of glory!

Shepherding their Sheep
arr. Richard Hillert

Shepherding their sheep at night under Bethlehem’s stars so bright.
Hydom, hydom, thidlidom.
Come an angel telling them they must go to Bethlehem.
“Hasten, hasten,” they did say; “Jesus Christ you’ll find the way.”
Sleeping in a manger bare, lies the infant child so fair.
Mary rocks him tenderly, Joseph sings a melody.
The Holly She Bears a Berry

arr. James E. Clemens

Oh, the holly she bears a berry as white as the milk,
And Mary she bore Jesus, all wrapped up in silk.
And Mary she bore Jesus, our Savior for to be,
And the first tree that’s in the greenwood, it was the holly.
Oh, the holly she bears a berry as green as the grass,
And Mary she bore Jesus, who died on the Cross.
Oh, the holly she bears a berry as black as the coal,
And Mary she bore Jesus, who died for us all.
Oh, the holly she bears a berry, as blood, it is red.
And we trust in our Savior, who rose from the dead.

Still, Still, Still

arr. Norman Luboff

Still, still, still one can hear the falling snow.
For all is hushed, the world is sleeping, Holy Star its vigil keeping.
Sleep, sleep, sleep ’tis the eve of our Saviour’s birth.
The night is peaceful all around you, close your eyes, let sleep surround you.
Dream, dream, dream of the joyous day to come.
While guardian angels without number watch you as you sweetly slumber.

Allegro from Concerto in B-flat Major

arr. Teresa Cobarrubia Yoder

’Twas in the Moon of Wintertime

’Twas in the moon of wintertime, When all the birds had fled,
That God the Lord of all the earth Sent angel choirs instead;
Before their light the stars grew dim, And wond’ring hunters hear the hymn:
Jesus your king is born, Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria.
Within a lodge of broken bark The tender babe was found;
A ragged robe of rabbit skin Enwrapped his beauty round;
But as the hunter braves drew nigh, The Angel song rang loud and high.
The earliest moon of wintertime Is not so round and fair
As was the ring of glory on The helpless infant there.
The chiefs from far before him knelt With gifts of fox and beaver pelt.
O Children of the forest free, The angel song is true;
The holy child of earth and heav’n Is born today for you.
Come kneel before the radiant boy, Who brings you beauty, peace and joy.

O Night Divine

arr. David Angerman and Joseph M. Martin

O holy night; the stars are brightly shining;
It is the night of the dear Savior’s birth;
Long lay the world in sin and error pining
’Til He appeared, and the soul felt His worth.
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!
O holy night! Come, hear the angel voices,
O holy night, O Night when Christ was born!
Led by the light brightly of faith serenely beaming
with glowing hearts beside his cradle stand;
Led by the light, the star so brightly gleaming,
Here came the wisemen from Orient land.

**Tollite Hostias** from *Christmas Oratorio*  
Camille Saint-Saëns

Lift up the offerings, and worship the Lord in this holy courtyard.
Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice, at the face of the Lord, for he cometh. Alleluia.

**Gesù Bambino**  
Pietro A. Yon  
*Former Music Director*

When blossoms flowered ’mid the snows Upon a winter night  
Was born the Child the Christmas Rose, The King of Love and Light.  
The angels sang, the shepherds sang, The grateful earth rejoiced,  
And at His blessed birth the stars Their exultation voiced. O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.  
Again the heart with rapture glows to greet the holy night  
That gave the world its Christmas Rose, Its King of Love and Light.  
Let every voice acclaim His name, The grateful chorus swell,  
From paradise to earth He came That we with Him might Dwell.

Kenneth Overton, *Baritone*

**Carol Fest**  
arr. James H. Laster

In dulci jubilo Let us our homage show;  
Our heart’s joy reclineth In praesepio like a bright star shineth Matris in gremio. Alpha es et O.  
‘Joseph dearest, Joseph mine, Help me cradle the child divine;  
God reward thee and all that’s thine In paradise,’ So prays the mother Mary.  
He came among us at Christmastide, In Bethlehem;  
Jesus, Lo, he comes, and loves, and saves, and frees us!  
‘Gladly, dear one, lady mine, Help cradle this child of thine;  
Men shall bring from far and wide Love’s diadem:  
God’s own light on us both shine In paradise, As prays the mother Mary.’  
O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep The silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth The everlasting light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.  
O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray,  
Cast out our sin, and enter in, Be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels The great tidings tell:  
O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel.
From heaven above to earth I come Glad tidings of great joy
I bring to all the world, and gladly sing.

While by my sheep I watched at night, Glad tidings brought and angel bright.
How great my joy! Joy, joy, joy! Praise we the Lord in heaven on high!
This gift of God we’ll cherish well, That ever joy our hearts shall fill.

Ding dong! merrily on high in heav’n the bells are ringing:
Ding dong! verily the sky is riv’n with angel singing.
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!

E’en so here below, let steeple bells be swungen,
And io, io, io by priest and people sungen.
Pray you, dutifully prime your matin chime, ye ringers;
May you beautifully rime your evetime song, ye singers.

**Allegro moderato** from *Concerto in B-flat Major*  
Antonio Vivaldi

**H Y M N**

*“Away in a Manger”*

John McFarland and James Murray

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1. Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
   The cattle are lowing, the baby awake.
2. Be near me, Lord Jesus! I ask you to stay
   How great my joy! Joy, joy, joy! Praise we the Lord in heaven on high!
3. This gift of God we’ll cherish well, That ever joy our hearts shall fill.
   Ding dong! merrily on high in heav’n the bells are ringing:

1. The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
   The cattle are lowing, the baby awake.
2. Close by me for ever, and love me, I pray.
   How great my joy! Joy, joy, joy! Praise we the Lord in heaven on high!
3. Pray you, dutifully prime your matin chime, ye ringers;
   May you beautifully rime your evetime song, ye singers.

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1. The stars in the bright sky looked down where the lay,
   The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.
2. I love you, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
   And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.
3. Bless all the dear children in your tender care,
   And fit us for heaven, to live with you there.
1. O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie! Above thy deep and dreamless sleep The silent stars go by; Yet in thy dark streets shineth The everlasting Light; The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.

2. For Christ is born of Mary, And gathered holy Child of Bethlehem! Descend to all above, While mortals sleep, the angels keep Their watch of wond’ring love. O morning stars, to thee come angels! The great glad tidings tell; O come to God the King, And peace to men on earth.

3. How silently, how silently, The wondrous gift is given! So God imparts to man hearts The blessing of his heav’n. No ear may hear his coming, But in this world of sin, Where meek souls will receive him still, The dear Christ enters in.

4. O Little Town of Bethlehem
ST. LOUIS

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.

The choir will sing verses 1-4. All sing verses 5 and 6.

“Once in Royal David’s City”
IRBY
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,
6. Not in that poor stable,
5. Through his own redeeming love,
6. With the oxen standing by,
5. child so dear and gentle,
6. see him; but in heaven,
5. heav’n above;
6. hand high;
5. on crowned
6. crowned

To the place where he is gone.
All in white shall wait around.

Organ Prelude

Improvisation on Adeste Fidelis
The Order of Mass
The Introductory Rites

Entrance Hymn
“O Come, All Ye Faithful/Venid, Fieles Todos”

ADESTE FIDELES

1. O come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant,
   O come, let us adore him.

2. En pobre se abre, vace el reclinado,
   Venid, adoramos,
   Venid, adoramos.

3. Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in celestial song,
   All ye citizens of heav’n above,
   Jesus, we celebrate your blessed name
   With solemn hymns of pleasing glory;
   For endless centuries mankind honors you.

4. Jesus, we celebrate your blessed name
   With solemn hymns of pleasing glory;
   For endless centuries mankind honors you.

2. In poor manger he lay reclining,
giving to the world eternal salvation,
the Holy Messiah, the incarnate Word.
Penitential Act

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, all say:
through my fault, through my fault,
through my most grievous fault;

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.

Kyrie

Cantor, then all:


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

Gloria

Gloria in excelsis Deo

Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Isaiah 9:1-6

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom
a light has shone.
You have brought them abundant joy
and great rejoicing,
as they rejoice before you as at the harvest,
as people make merry when dividing spoils.
For the yoke that burdened them,
the pole on their shoulder,
and the rod of their taskmaster
you have smashed, as on the day of Midian.
For every boot that tramped in battle,
every cloak rolled in blood,
will be burned as fuel for flames.
For a child is born to us, a son is given us;
upon his shoulder dominion rests.
They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero,
Father-Forever, Prince of Peace.
His dominion is vast
and forever peaceful,
from David’s throne, and over his kingdom,
which he confirms and sustains
by judgment and justice,
both now and forever.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this!

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

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM**

Sing to the LORD a new song;
 sing to the LORD, all you lands.
Sing to the LORD; bless his name. R

Announce his salvation, day after day.
 Tell his glory among the nations;
 among all peoples, his wondrous deeds. R

Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice;
 let the sea and what fills it resound;
 let the plains be joyful and all that is in them!
Then shall all the trees of the forest exult. R

They shall exult before the LORD, for he comes;
 for he comes to rule the earth.
He shall rule the world with justice
 and the peoples with his constancy. R

**SEGUNDA LECTURA**

Vino a este mundo la gracia de Dios,
trayendo la salvación a todos los hombres
y educándonos para que aprendamos a rechazar la maldad
y los deseos mundanos,
y vivamos así en este mundo como seres responsables,

*The grace of God has appeared,*
*saving all*
*and training us to reject godless ways*
*and worldly desires*
*and to live temperately,*
In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. So all went to be enrolled, each to his own town. And Joseph too went up from Galilee from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David that is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there, the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

STAND
Christmastime Alleluia
James Chepponis

justos y que sirven a Dios.
Pues esperamos el día feliz en que se manifestará con su gloria nuestro magnífico Dios y Salvador Cristo Jesús. El se sacrificó por nosotros y, de esa manera, nos liberó de las fuerzas del pecado y purificó a su pueblo, un pueblo que le pertenece y que no desea otra cosa que hacer el bien.

Palabra de Dios.
Te alabamos Señor.

GoospeL
 Luke 2:1-14

just, and devoutly in this age, as we await the blessed hope, the appearance of the glory of our great God and savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to deliver us from all lawlessness and to cleanse for himself a people as his own, eager to do what is good.

Acclamation Before the Gospel

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia! Alleluia!

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Now there were shepherds in that region living in the fields and keeping the night watch over their flock.
The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were struck with great fear.
The angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.
For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord.
And this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.”
And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

BE SEATED

HOMILY

Cardinal Dolan

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
At the words that follow, up to and including “and became man,” all genuflect:

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
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.

I 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 adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**Universal Prayer**

Cardinal: On this Holy Night let us implore the God of perfect peace to fill us with the Glory of the Word-made-flesh.

(English): Our Response is **“Lord, hear our prayer.”**

(Italian): For our Holy Father, Pope Francis, that he may continue to lead the Church with great love and compassion.
Let us pray to the Lord. R

(German): For Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan, his assistant bishops, all bishops, priests, deacons, and religious, that they will continue to inspire the Holy people of God as living examples of Christ’s love.
Let us pray to the Lord. R

(Creole): For a greater respect for all human life from the first moment of conception until natural death.
Let us pray to the Lord. R
(Igbo): For the nations and peoples of the world, that justice and peace may reign in all lands. Let us pray to the Lord. Rê

(Chinese): For the people of God in the Archdiocese of New York, that our work and worship together may celebrate Christ’s presence among us. Let us pray to the Lord. Rê

(Spanish): For the poor; sick, especially those suffering from COVID-19; the suffering; and the lonely, that in the miracle of Christ’s birth, they may experience the healing and hope of God. Let us pray to the Lord. Rê

(Tagalog): For all who have died, that the new life of the Messiah may be theirs. Let us pray to the Lord. Rê

Cardinal: Lord God, your love knows no limit, your compassion no end. Hear the prayers we make as we celebrate your most perfect gift to your human family: The Messiah, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. All: Amen.

BE SEATED

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

THE PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

ANTHEM

“Gloria in altissimis Deo” from Christmas Oratorio
Camille Saint-Saëns

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.

STAND

THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER
**Sanctus**

*Resonet in Laudibus Acclamations*

Jennifer Pascual

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts. Heav’n 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, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

KNEEL

**Mystery of Faith**

*Resonet in Laudibus Acclamations*

Jennifer Pascual

When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.

**Great Amen**

*Resonet in Laudibus Acclamations*

Jennifer Pascual

Amen, Amen, Amen.

STAND

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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.
COMMUNION

The reception of Holy Communion is the most sacred act for Catholics. We believe that we are then receiving the Body and Blood of Christ. Catholics who are properly prepared should approach the ministers of Holy Communion.

We ask non-Catholics not to receive. They are encouraged, however, to come forward with arms crossed over their heart to receive a blessing.
AN ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

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

ANTIPHON

Mode VI

Amidst the splendors of the heavenly sanctuary,
from the womb, before the morning star, I have begotten you.

ANTHEM

“O Holy Night”
Adolphe Adam
‘arr. John Grady
Former Music Director

O holy night, the stars are brightly shining, It is the night of the dear Savior’s birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining, Till He appeared, and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices, For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn;
Fall on your knees, oh hear the angel voices! O night divine! O Night when Christ was born.

Truly He taught us to love one another, His law is love and his gospel is peace.
Chains shall He break, for the slave is our brother, And in His name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we, Let all within us praise His holy name.
He knows our need, to our weakness no stranger. Behold your King, before Him lowly bend.
Led by the light of faith serenely beaming, With glowing hearts by His cradle we stand.
So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming, Here came the wise men from Orient land.
The King of Kings lay thus in lowly manger, In all our trials born to be our friend.
Christ is the Lord, Then ever, ever praise we; His power and glory evermore proclaim.

Isabel Leonard, Mezzo-Soprano - Metropolitan Opera
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.

2. Silent night, holy night,
   look how the world’s light
shines in great splendor on the face
   of the baby Jesus in the manger
shines the star of peace.

STAND
**The Concluding Rites**

**Blessing**

**Recessional Hymn**

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

MENDELSSOHN

1. Hark! the herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn King;
2. Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord;
3. Hail the heav’n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!

1. Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled;
2. Late in time behold him come, Offspring of a virgin’s womb;
3. Light and life to all he brings, Ris’n with healing in his wings;

1. Joyful all ye nations rise, Join the triumph of the skies,
2. Veiled in flesh the God-head see, Hail th’incarnate Deity!
3. Mild he lays his glory by, Born that man no more may die,

1. With th’angelic host proclaim, Christ is born in Bethlehem.
2. Pleased as man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
3. Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth.

Hark! the herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn King.

**Postludes**

“Hallelujah!” from Messiah

George Frideric Handel

Hallelujah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.
The Kingdom of this world is become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ;
and He shall reign for ever and ever, King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

“Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella”

Keith Chapman
GUIDELINES FOR THE RECEIPTION OF COMMUNION

FOR CATHOLICS
As Catholics, we fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist when we receive Holy Communion. We are encouraged to receive Communion devoutly and frequently. In order to be properly disposed to receive Communion, participants should not be conscious of grave sin and normally should have fasted for one hour. A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord without prior sacramental confession except for a grave reason where there is no opportunity for confession. In this case, the person is to be mindful of the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition, including the intention of confessing as soon as possible (Code of Canon Law, canon 916). A frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance is encouraged for all.

FOR OUR FELLOW CHRISTIANS
We welcome our fellow Christians to this celebration of the Eucharist as our brothers and sisters. We pray that our common baptism and the action of the Holy Spirit in this Eucharist will draw us closer to one another and begin to dispel the sad divisions which separate us. We pray that these will lessen and finally disappear, in keeping with Christ’s prayer for us “that they may all be one” (John 17:21).

Because Catholics believe that the celebration of the Eucharist is a sign of the reality of the oneness of faith, life, and worship, members of those churches with whom we are not yet fully united are ordinarily not admitted to Holy Communion. Eucharistic sharing in exceptional circumstances by other Christians requires permission according to the directives of the diocesan bishop and the provisions of canon law (canon 844 §4). Members of Orthodox Churches, the Assyrian Church of the East, and the Polish National Catholic Church are urged to respect the discipline of their own Churches. According to Roman Catholic Discipline, the Code of Canon Law does not object to the reception of Communion by Christians of these Churches (canon 844 §3).

FOR THOSE NOT RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION
All who are not receiving Holy Communion are encouraged to express in their hearts a prayerful desire for unity with the Lord Jesus and with one another.

FOR NON-CHRISTIANS
We also welcome to this celebration those who do not share our faith in Jesus Christ. While we cannot admit them to Holy Communion, we ask them to offer their prayers for the peace and the unity of the human family.

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Merry Christmas

ST. PATRICK’S CATHEDRAL
Fifth Avenue at 50th Street
New York, NY 10022
(212) 753-2261
www.saintpatricks cathedral.org