

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

AT THE MASS DURING THE NIGHT



THE CATHEDRAL OF SAINT PAUL

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

DECEMBER 25, 2019

OFFICE OF READINGS

OPENING VERSE (STAND)

God, come to my assistance. R Lord, make haste to help me. Glory to
the Father, and to the Son, and to the Ho-ly Spir-it: as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be for ever. Amen. Alle-lu-ia.

HYMN

ANTIOCH

1 Joy to the world! the Lord is come: Let earth re - ceive her
2 Joy to the world! the Sav - ior reigns: Let us, our songs em -
3 No more let sin and sor - rows grow, Nor thorns in - fest the
4 He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the na - tions

King; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him room, And
play; While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains; Re -
ground; He comes to make his bless - ings flow Far
prove The glo - ries of his right - eous - ness, And

heav'n and na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture
peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing
as the curse is found, Far as the curse is
won - ders of his love, And won - ders of his

sing, And heav'n, and heav'n, and na - ture sing.
joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, Far as, far as the curse is found.
love, And won - ders, won - ders of his love.

After the hymn follows the psalmody of the office. Each psalm has an associated antiphon. The antiphon will be introduced, then the cantor will chant the incipit of the antiphon (the portion up to the asterisk, i.e., “The Lord said to me...”) Please join in the remainder of the antiphon. After the psalm, all sing the antiphon in its entirety. The psalm verses are sung alternating by verse between schola and assembly. The psalm tone is found at the end of the antiphon below.

ANTIPHON I (SIT)

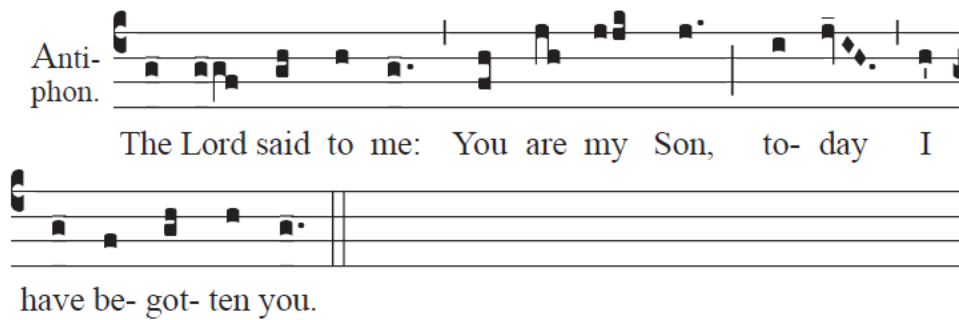
I Ant.
VIII G

HE Lord said to me: * You are my Son, to- day I
have be- got- ten you.

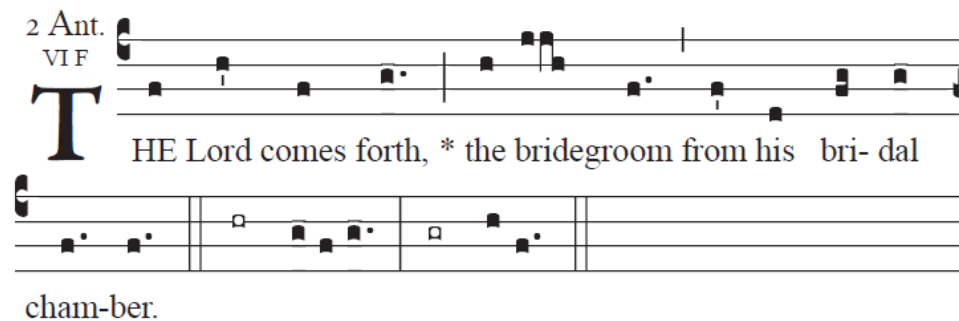
PSALM 2

- Cantor: Why this tumult | *a-mong* **na**-tions, *
- among peoples this | *use-less* **mur**-muring?
- All: They arise, the kings | *of the* **earth**, *
- princes plot against the Lord and | *his A*-**noint**-ed.
- Cantor: “Come, let us | *break their* **fet**-ters, *
- come, let us cast | *off their* **yoke**.”
- All: He who sits in the | *heav-ens* **laughs**; *
- the Lord is laughing | *them to* **scorn**.
- Cantor: Then he will speak | *in his* **an**-ger, *
- his rage will strike | *them with* **ter**-ror.
- All: “It is I who have set | *up my* **king** *
- on Zion, my | *ho-ly* **moun**-tain.”
- Cantor: I will announce the decree of the Lord: / The Lord said to me. “You | *are my* **Son**. *
- It is I who have begotten | *you this* **day**.
- All: Ask and I shall bequeath | *you the* **na**-tions, *
- put the ends of the earth in | *your* **pos**-ses-sion.
- Cantor: With a rod of iron | *you will* **break** them, *
- shatter them like a | *pot-ter’s* **jar**.”
- All: Now, O kings, | *un-der*-**stand**, *
- take warning, rulers | *of the* **earth**,
- Cantor: serve the | *Lord with* **awe** *
- and trembling, pay | *him your* **hom**-age
- All: lest he be angry and you perish; / for suddenly his an- | *ger will* **blaze**. *
- Blessed are they who put their | *trust in* **God**.
- Cantor: Glory to the Father, and | *to the* **Son**, *
- and to the | *Ho-ly* **Spir**-it :

All: as it was in the beginn- | ing, is **now**, *
and will be for ev- | er. **A-men**.



ANTIPHON II



PSALM 19A

Cantor: The heavens proclaim the glo- | ry of **God** *
and the firmament shows forth the work of | his **hands**.

All: Day unto day takes | *up the* **sto-ry** *
and night unto night makes known | *the* **mes-sage**.

Cantor: No speech, no word, no voice is heard /
yet their span extends through | *all the* **earth**, *
their words to the utmost bounds of | *the* **world**.

All: There he has placed a tent for the sun; /
it comes forth like a bridegroom coming | *from his* tent, *
rejoices like a champion to run | *its* **course**.

Cantor: At the end of the sky is the rising of the sun; /
to the furthest end of the sky | *is its* **course**. *
There is nothing concealed from its burn- | ing **heat**.

All: Glory to the Father, and | *to the* **Son**, *
and to the Ho- | ly **Spir-it**:

Cantor: as it was in the beginn- | ing, is **now**, *
and will be for ever. | **A-men**.

(The antiphon is then repeated by all.)

ANTIPHON III

3 Ant.
IV E

YOUR words are filled with grace, * be-cause God has blest
you for ev- er.

PSALM 45

Cantor: My heart overflows with noble words. /
To the king I must speak the song I have | **made**; *
my tongue as nimble as the pen of | *a scribe*.

All: You are the fairest of the children of men /
and graciousness is poured upon your | **lips**: *
because God has blest you for ev-|*er*-**more**.

Cantor: O mighty one, gird your sword upon your thigh; /
in splendor and state, ride on in | **tri-umph** *
for the cause of truth and goodness | *and right*.

All: Take aim with your bow in your dread right hand. /
Your arrows are sharp: peoples fall be-| **neath** you. *
The foes of the king fall down and | *lose heart*.

Cantor: Your throne, O God, shall endure for ever. /
A scepter of justice is the scepter of your | **king-dom**. *
Your love is for justice, your hatred | *for e-vil*.

All: Therefore God, your God, has anointed you /
with the oil of gladness above other | **kings**: *
your robes are fragrant with aloes | *and myrrh*.

Cantor: From the ivory palace you are greeted with music. /
The daughters of kings are among your | **loved** ones. *
On your right stands the queen in gold | *of O-phir*.

All: Listen, O daughter, give ear to my | **words**: *
forget your own people and your fa-| *ther's house*.

Cantor: So will the king desire your | **beau-ty**: *
he is your lord, pay homage | *to him*.

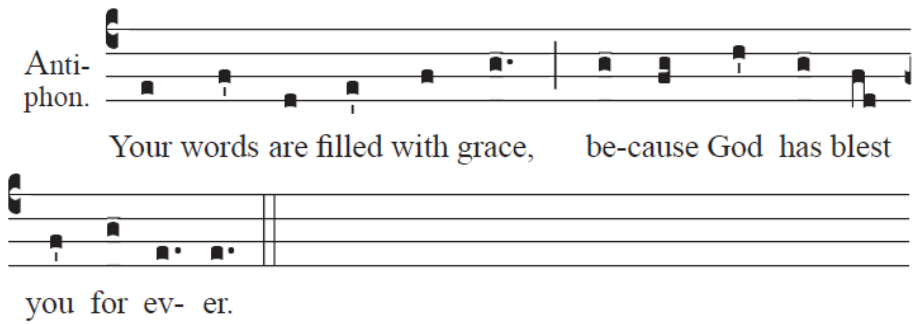
All: And the people of Tyre shall come with | **gifts**, *
the richest of the people shall seek | *your fav-or*.

Cantor: The daughter of the king is clothed with | **splen-dor**, *
her robes embroidered with pearls set | *in gold*.

All: She is led to the king with her maiden companions. /
They are escorted amid gladness and | **joy**; *
they pass within the palace of | *the king*.

(cont. next page)

Cantor: Sons shall be yours in place of your | **fa**-thers: *
 you will make them princes over all | *the earth*.
All: May this song make your name for ever re-|**mem**-bered. *
 May the peoples praise you from age | *to age*.
Cantor: Glory to the Father, and to the | **Son**, *
 and to the Ho-|*ly Spir*-it :
All: as it was in the beginning, is | **now**, *
 and will be for ever. | **A-men**.



℣. The Word was made man, alleluia.
 ℟. He lived among us, alleluia.

FIRST READING

ISAIAH 11:1-10

RESPONSORY

Cantor: *All:*

T *V* ODAY, for our sake, † the King of heav-en chose to be
 born of his vir-gin moth-er, to reclaim lost men for the heav-
 en-ly kingdom. * All the an-gels cry a-loud with joy, for God
Cantor:
 has come himself to save mankind. ℣. Glo-ry to God in the
All:
 highest, and peace to his peo-ple on earth. * All the an-gels
 cry a-loud with joy, for God has come himself to save mankind.

RESPONSORY

Cantor: *All:*

V **T**O-DAY true peace † came down to us from heav-en.

* To-day the whole earth was filled with heav-en's sweetness.

Cantor:

¶ To-day a new day dawns, the day of our re-demption, prepared

by God from a- ges past, the be-ginning of our nev- er end-ing

All:

gladness. * To-day the whole earth was filled with heav-en's

sweetness.

CHRISTMAS PROCLAMATION FROM THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY

The Roman Martyrology for Christmas Day contains a formal announcement of the birth of Christ in the style of a proclamation. It begins with creation and relates the birth of the Lord to the major events and personages of sacred and secular history.

TE DEUM *Simple Tone*

Te Deum laudamus: te Dominum confitemur.
 Te aeternum patrem, omnis terra veneratur.
 Tibi omnes Angeli: tibi caeli et universae potestates.
 Tibi cherubim et seraphim, incessabili voce proclamant:
 "Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
 Pleni sunt caeli et terra maiestatis gloriae tuae."
 Te gloriosus Apostolorum chorus,
 Te Prophetarum laudabilis numerus,
 Te Martyrum candidatus laudat exercitus.
 Te per orbem terrarum sancta confitetur Ecclesia:
 Patrem immensae maiestatis;
 Venerandum tuum verum et unicum Filium;
 Sanctum quoque Paraclitum Spiritum.
 Tu rex gloriae, Christe:
 Tu Patris sempiternus es Filius.
 Tu, ad liberandum suscepturus hominem, non horruisti Virginis
 uterum.

Chanted in alternation between Cathedral Choir Ladies and Men

WE praise thee, O God: we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.
 All the earth doth worship thee: the Father everlasting.
 To thee all Angels cry aloud: the Heavens, and all the Powers therein.
 To thee Cherubin and Seraphin: continually do cry,
 Holy, Holy, Holy: Lord God of Sabaoth;
 Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty: of thy glory.
 The glorious company of the Apostles: praise thee.
 The goodly fellowship of the Prophets: praise thee.
 The noble army of Martyrs: praise thee.
 The holy Church throughout all the world: doth acknowledge thee;
 The Father: of an infinite Majesty;
 Thine honourable, true: and only Son;
 Also the Holy Ghost: the Comforter.
 Thou art the King of Glory: O Christ.
 Thou art the everlasting Son: of the Father.
 When thou tookest upon thee to deliver man: thou didst not abhor
 the Virgin's womb.

Tu, devicto mortis aculeo,
 aperuisti credentibus regna caelorum.
 Tu ad dexteram Dei sedes, in gloria Patris.
 Iudex crederis esse venturus.
 Te ergo quaesumus, tuis famulis subveni: quos pretioso sanguine
 redemisti.
 Aeterna fac cum sanctis tuis in gloria numerari.
 Salvum fac populum tuum, Domine, et benedic hereditati tuae.
 Et rege eos, et extolle illos usque in aeternum.
 Per singulos dies benedicimus te: et laudamus nomen tuum in
 saeculum, et in saeculum saeculi.
 Dignare, Domine, die isto sine peccato nos custodire.
 Miserere nostri, Domine, miserere nostri.
 Fiat misericordia tua, Domine, super nos: quemadmodum spera-
 vimus in te. In te, Domine, speravi: non confundar in aeternum.

When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death:
 thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers.
 Thou sittest at the right hand of God: in the glory of the Father.
 We believe that thou shalt come: to be our Judge.
 We therefore pray thee, help thy servants: whom thou hast redeemed
 with thy precious blood.
 Make them to be numbered with thy Saints: in glory everlasting.
 O Lord, save thy people: and bless thine heritage.
 Govern them: and lift them up for ever.
 Day by day: we magnify thee; And we worship thy Name: ever world
 without end.
 Vouchsafe, O Lord: to keep us this day without sin.
 O Lord, have mercy upon us: have mercy upon us.
 O Lord, let thy mercy lighten upon us: as our trust is in thee.
 O Lord, in thee have I trusted: let me never be confounded.

PRAYER AND DISMISSAL

B Benedicamus Dó-mi-no.

R. De-o grá-ti-as.

PRELUDE

HYMN TO THE VIRGIN
 IN THE BLEAK MIDWINTER

BENJAMIN BRITTEN
 HAROLD DARKE

ENTRANCE HYMN

ADESTE FIDELES

O come, all ye faith-ful, Joy-ful and tri-um-phant, O
 God of God, Light of Light,
 Sing, choirs of an-gels, Sing in ex-al-ta-tion,
 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, Born this hap-py morn-ing,

come ye, O come ye to Beth-le-hem; Come and be-hold him
 Lo! he ab-hors not the Vir-gin's womb; Ve-ry God, Be-
 Sing, all ye ci-ti-zens of heav'n a-bove; Glo-ry to God
 Je-su, to thee be glor-ry giv'n; Word of the Fa-ther,

Born the King of An-gels:
 got-ten, not cre-a-ted: O come, let us a-dore him, O come, let us a-
 In the high-est:
 Now in flesh ap-pear-ing:



dore him, O come, let us a - dore him, Christ — the Lord!

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON *Dominus dixit ad me*

PSALM 2:7, 1, 2, 8

Dominus dixit ad me: Filius meus es tu, ego hodie genui te. V. Quare fremuerunt gentes: et populi meditati sunt inania?

The Lord said to me: You are my son. It is I who have begotten you this day. V. Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain?

KYRIE

MESSE DE MINUIT (Midnight Mass) MARC-ANTOINE CHARPENTIER

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

GLORIA

MESSE DE MINUIT (Midnight Mass) MARC-ANTOINE CHARPENTIER

Glória in excelsis Deo
et in terra pax homínibus bonæ voluntátis.
Laudámus te,
benedicimus te,
adorámus te,
glorificámus te,
grátias ágimus tibi propter magnam glóriam tuam,
Dómine Deus, Rex cæléstis,
Deus Pater omnipotens.
Dómine Fili unigénite, Jesu Christe,
Dómine Deus, Agnus Dei, Fílius Patris,
qui tollis peccáta mundi, miserére nobis;
qui tollis peccáta mundi, súscipe deprecaciónem nostram.
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserére nobis.
Quóniam tu solus Sanctus,
tu solus Dóminus,
tu solus Altíssimus, Jesu Christe,
cum Sancto Spíritu: in glória Dei Patris. Amen.

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.
We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.
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 LITURGY OF THE WORD

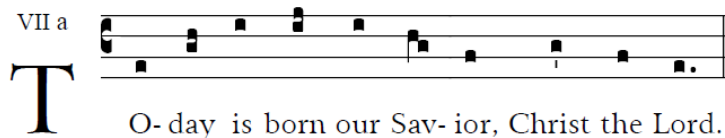
The Mass readings are found on page 29 in Sunday's Word.

FIRST READING

ISAIAH 9:1-6

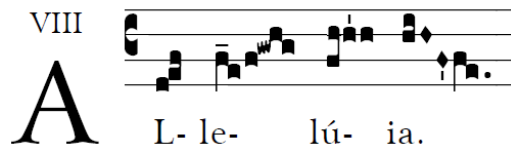
RESPONSORIAL PSALM

PSALM 96:1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13



O-day is born our Sav-ior, Christ the Lord.

ALLELUIA



Dominus dixit ad me: Filius meus es tu, ego hodie genui te. / *The Lord said to me: You are my son. I have begotten you this day.*

GOSPEL

LUKE 2:1-14

HOMILY

CREDO (CREED/PROFESSION OF FAITH)

CREDO III

Please join in the singing of the Creed.

XVII. s.

C Redo in unum De- um, Patrem omni-po-téntem, factó-rem cæ-li et terræ,
I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth

vi-si-bí-li-um óm-ni- um, et invi-si-bí- li- um. Et in unum Dómi-num Je-sum Chri-
Of all things visible and invisible, I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,

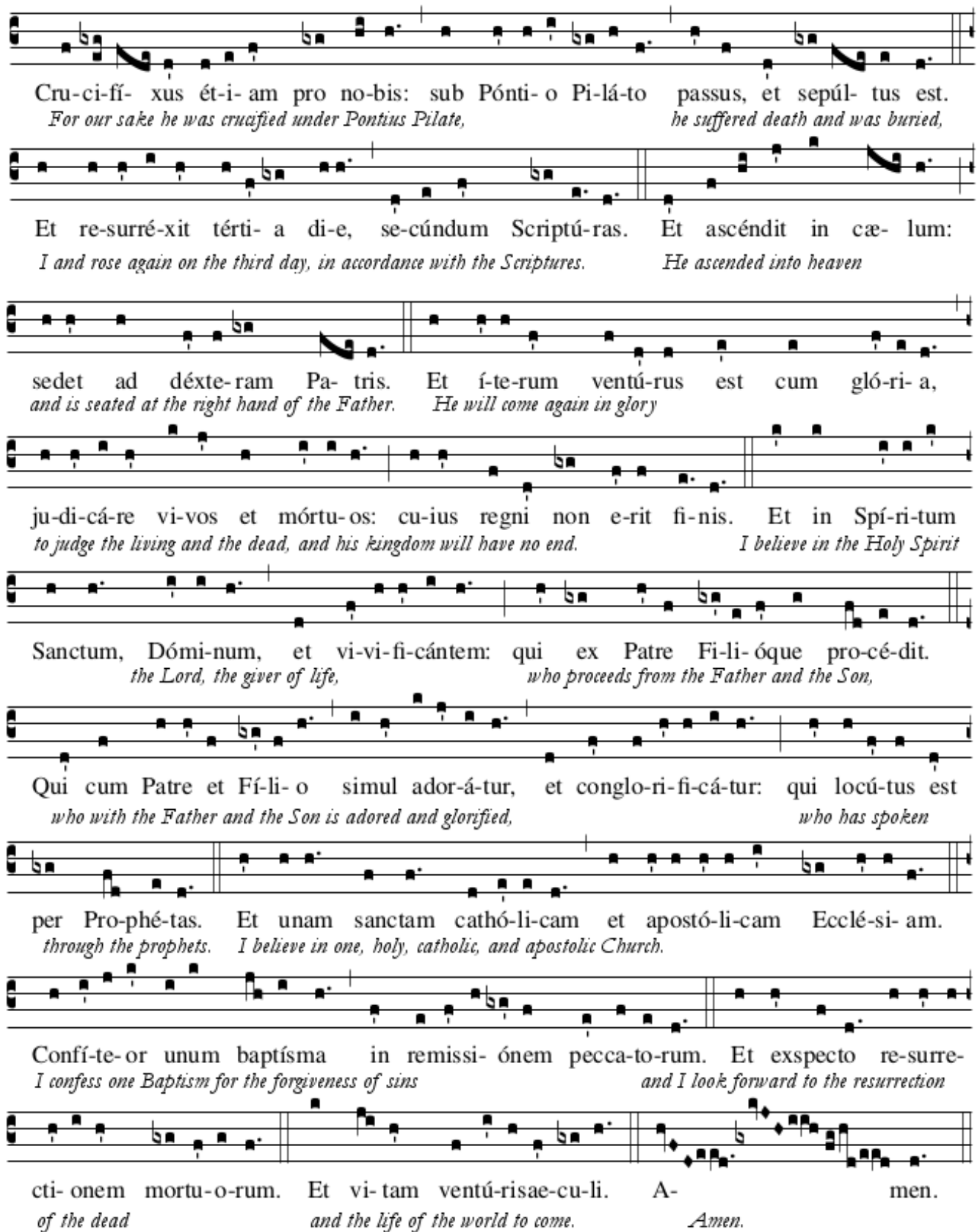
stum, Fí-li- um De-i un-i-gé-ni-tum. Et ex Patre na- tum ante ómni- a sae- cu-la.
the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages.

De-um de De-o, lumen de lúmi-ne, De-um ve-rum de De-o ve-ro.
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,

Gé-ni-tum, non fac-tum, consubstanti- á-lem Patri: per quem ómni- a fac- ta sunt.
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made.

Qui propter nos hómi-nes, et propter nostram sa- lú-tem descéndit de cæ-lis.
For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

All kneel and pause singing while Cathedral Choir sings “Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto...et homo factus est” (“And by the Holy Spirit was incarnate...and became man”) from the Charpentier Mass. Then stand and resume singing (next page).



Cru-ci-fí- xus ét-i- am pro no-bis: sub Pónti- o Pi-lá-to passus, et sepúl- tus est.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried,

Et re-surré-xit térti- a di-e, se-cúndum Scriptú-ras. Et ascéndit in cæ- lum:
I and rose again on the third day, in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven

sedet ad dexte-ram Pa- tris. Et í-te-rum ventú-rus est cum gló-ri- a,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory

ju-di-cá-re vi-vos et mórtu-os: cu-ius regni non e-rit fi-nis. Et in Spí-ri-tum
to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit

Sanctum, Dómi-num, et vi-vi-fi-cántem: qui ex Patre Fi-li-óque pro-cé-dit.
the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son,

Qui cum Patre et Fí-li- o simul ador-á-tur, et conglo-ri-fi-cá-tur: qui locú-tus est
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken

per Pro-phé-tas. Et unam sanctam cathó-li-cam et apostó-li-cam Ecclé-si- am.
through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.

Confí-te-or unum baptísma in remissi- ónem pecca-to-rum. Et exspecto re-surre-
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection

cti- onem mortu-o-rum. Et vi- tam ventú-risae-cu-li. A- men.
of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER (GENERAL INTERCESSIONS)

After the Credo, those present pray for the needs of the Church and of the world.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Page 7 of Sunday's Word

OFFERTORY

ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH

GLORIA



1. An - gels we have heard on high Sweet - ly sing - ing
2. Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous
3. Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the
4. See him in a man - ger laid, Whom the choirs of



o'er the plains, And the moun - tains in re - ply
strains pro - long? Say what may the tid - ings be,
an - gels sing; Come a - dore, on bend - ed knee,
an - gels praise; Mar - y, Jo - seph, lend your aid,



Ech - o back their joy - ous strains.
Which in - spire your heav'n - ly song.
Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.
While our hearts in love we raise.



Glo - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o, Glo -



ri - a in ex-cel-sis De - o.

OFFERTORY ANTIPHON *Laetentur caeli*

PSALM 96:11

Laetentur caeli et exsultet terra ante faciem Domini: quoniam venit.

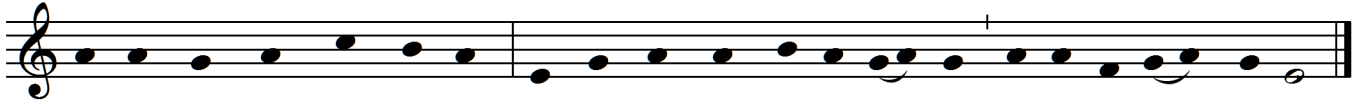
Let the heavens rejoice and the earth exult before the face of the Lord, for he comes.

SANCTUS & BENEDICTUS

MESSE DE MINUIT (Midnight Mass) MARC-ANTOINE CHARPENTIER

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus: Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt cæli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis. Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis. / Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. 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.

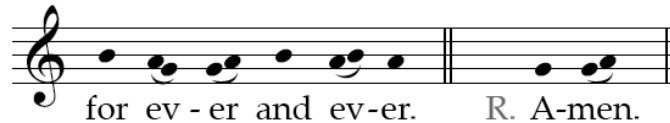
MYSTERIUM FIDEI



We pro-claim your Death, O Lord, and pro-fess your Res-ur-rec-tion un-til you come a-gain.

AMEN

After the Doxology, the people respond "Amen" according to the formula below:



AGNUS DEI

MESSE DE MINUIT (Midnight Mass) MARC-ANTOINE CHARPENTIER

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: miserere nobis. Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: dona nobis pacem. / Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world: have mercy on us. Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world: have mercy on us. Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant us peace.



HOLY COMMUNION

We invite all Catholics who are properly disposed (i.e., in the state of grace and having fasted for one hour before communion) to come forward in the usual way to receive Holy Communion.

All others, including our non-Catholic guests, may remain in their pews and join us in prayer. Alternatively, to participate in the communion procession and receive a blessing, come forward in the line and cross your arms over your chest as you approach the minister. Thank you.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON *In splendoribus*

PSALM 110:3

In splendoribus sanctorum ex utero ante luciferum genui te.

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

COMMUNION

(Please join in singing the Christmas carols below.)

AWAY IN A MANGER

MUELLER

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head. The stars in the sky looked down where He lay, The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the Baby awakes, But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes; I love Thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay Close by me forever, and love me, I pray; Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care, And fit us for Heaven to live with Thee there.

SILENT NIGHT

STILLE NACHT

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.

Silent night, holy night, Shepherds quake at the sight; Glories stream from heaven afar, Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia! Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

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.



POSTCOMMUNION

LULLY, LULLA, LULLAY

PHILIP STOPFORD

Lully, lulla, lullay: Lully, lullay, thou little tiny child, Bye bye, lully, lullay. Thou little tiny child, Bye bye, lully, lullay. O sisters too, how may we do For to preserve this day This poor youngling for whom we sing, "Bye bye, lully, lullay"? Lully, lulla... Herod the king, in his raging, Chargèd he hath this day His men of might in his own sight All young children to slay. Lully, lulla... That woe is me, poor child, for thee And ever mourn and may For thy parting neither say nor sing, "Bye bye, lully, lullay." Lully, lulla...
—Coventry Carol, 16th Century England

CLOSING

HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

MENDELSSOHN



1. Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the
2. Christ, by high - est heaven a - dored, Christ the ev - er - of
3. Hail the heav'n - born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of
new - born King; Peace on earth, and mer - cy mild
last - ing Lord: Late in time be - hold him come,
Right - eous - ness! Light and life to all he brings,
God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!" Joy - ful, all you
Off - spring of the Vir - gin's womb. Veiled in flesh the
Ris'n with heal - ing in his wings. Mild he lays his
na - tions, rise, Join the tri - umph of the skies;
God - head see: Hail the in - car - nate De - i - ty,
glo - ry by, Born that we no more may die,
With the an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el.
Born to raise us from the earth, Born to give us sec - ond birth.
Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King!"

VOLUNTARY

NOËLS FOR CHRISTMASTIDE

LOUIS-CLAUDE D'AQUIN

ABOUT OUR CHRISTMAS MUSIC

Merry Christmas from all here at the Cathedral of St. Paul! We hope you and your family have a wonderful Christmas season and will return to worship with us again soon. At Midnight Mass, we hear the Gospel account of the Nativity of Christ. From the very beginning of the liturgy, as tonight's entrance antiphon and the first psalm from the Office of Readings demonstrates, Jesus' divine sonship is the reason for this day. It seems at times that the whole world is engaged in vain struggles, as the antiphon's versicle sings. However, the gift of peace is what our Lord Jesus Christ wants us to experience on this day more than anything. To add more emphasis, the Church even assigns the verse for the Alleluia from the same Psalm 2. So, it is very appropriate to view this entire liturgy through the lens of "peace on earth". Consisting of psalmody, readings, and responsories, the Office of Readings (prayed before Mass) is the spiritual child, if you will, of the ancient offices of *Vigils* (traditionally prayed in the middle of the night in monasteries) and *Matins* (*over*)

(traditionally said in the morning as the first office of the day). Thus, the time which we pray the Office of Readings tonight hearkens back to the traditional structure of the Divine Office. The rich psalmody helps place our Christmas celebration in the correct context of prayer. The traditional Roman hymn of thanksgiving, the *Te Deum*, is prayed, and we are progress to the prelude to Mass. This year, it consists of Britten's famous double-choir setting of an anonymous 14th Century English carol. It boggles the mind that Britten was but 16 years old when he wrote "A Hymn to the Virgin". The setting contrasts refrains in English with small interjections in Latin. The translation follows below. Darke's setting of "In the bleak midwinter" is rather less famous than Holst's hymn harmonization of the same Christina Rossetti poem, but has its own merits—especially a pervading sense of tranquility. Tonight's major work is Marc-Antoine Charpentier's *Messe de Minuit* (in English, Midnight Mass). Charpentier was, in his own time, recognized as the greatest composer in France of ecclesiastical and liturgical music. His corpus is of uniformly high quality and is a perfect example of French Baroque style. This Mass, written for performance in a church (as one can tell from the voice parts and ranges), is one of his masterpieces. Based on French carols, it is an ideal work in that it respects the dramatic arc of the Sacred Liturgy while also integrating elements of popular devotion (the carols) into the larger whole. Charpentier often uses smaller groups (a semichorus, trios, and duos) to great effect, often doubling them with instruments as well. In fact, his sensitive use of instruments (in this case, doubled violins and flutes, along with viola and cello) is a highlight of this piece. The work is a bit of a challenge for the singers, as we sing this work from an urtext (original) edition which has not transposed ranges. While this allows a more authentic performance, the vocal ranges correspond to an all-male choir (with boy trebles and male altos of very high range) rather than a modern mixed choir. All the same, these ranges suit the Cathedral's traditional architecture and acoustic created thereby. We hope you enjoy this wonderful work. The postcommunion is a 21st Century setting of the Coventry Carol by British composer Philip Stopford. Popularized by Voces8, this setting uses freely-composed music to set the traditional text. Arranged in similar format to the original, the final refrain has a stunning descant. As usual, our hymns are presented with the now-traditional arrangements and descants by the late David Willcocks of King's College, Cambridge. The voluntaries after Mass are compositions of D'Aquin, a virtuoso French organist of the very late Baroque, whose style pays tribute in many ways to Charpentier and his forbears. We hope this liturgy helps inaugurate your celebration of the Christmas season well. Please visit the Cathedral's sacred music pages (www.stpaulsbhm.org/sacred-music) to learn more about our offerings, join the ensembles, or see how you might contribute to our music apostolates at the Cathedral! Merry Christmas!

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE GENEROUS DONORS WHO MADE POSSIBLE THE
PURCHASE OF SCORES AND HIRING OF ORCHESTRA FOR THIS SPECIAL MASS.



COPYRIGHTS

All music used with permission. Onelicense #A702187