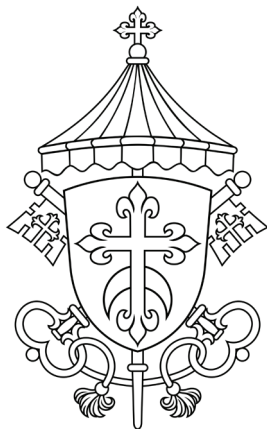


ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL



Solemn Mass



The Nativity of the Lord

25 December 2025

10.30am

WELCOME

to St Mary's Cathedral which stands in the centre of Sydney as a Christian statement of grace and beauty. Generations of artists have bequeathed to it their magnificent gifts in stone and glass, designing a unique space of solace and prayer within this vibrant city. This Cathedral represents the spiritual origins of the Catholic Church in Australia. It is one of Sydney's most treasured historic buildings and one of the finest examples of English-style gothic churches in the world. William Wilkinson Wardell, the 19th century architect, dreamed of a gothic structure shaped from the local yellow-block sandstone on which this city is built. The building was finally completed 100 years after the architect's death. The Cathedral is dedicated to Mary, Immaculate Mother of God, Help of Christians.

APOSTOLIC BLESSING

At the end of this Mass the Archbishop will impart the Papal Blessing, which carries with it the grant of a Plenary Indulgence. The Plenary Indulgence may be received by all Catholics present who are truly penitent; and have confessed their sins, have prayed for the intentions of the Pope and the Church, and have received Holy Communion.

An Indulgence is 'a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian who is duly disposed gains under certain prescribed conditions through the action of the Church which, as the minister of redemption, dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints. An indulgence is partial or plenary according as it removes either part or all of the temporal punishment due to sin.' (Pope Paul VI, *Indulgentiarum doctrina*)

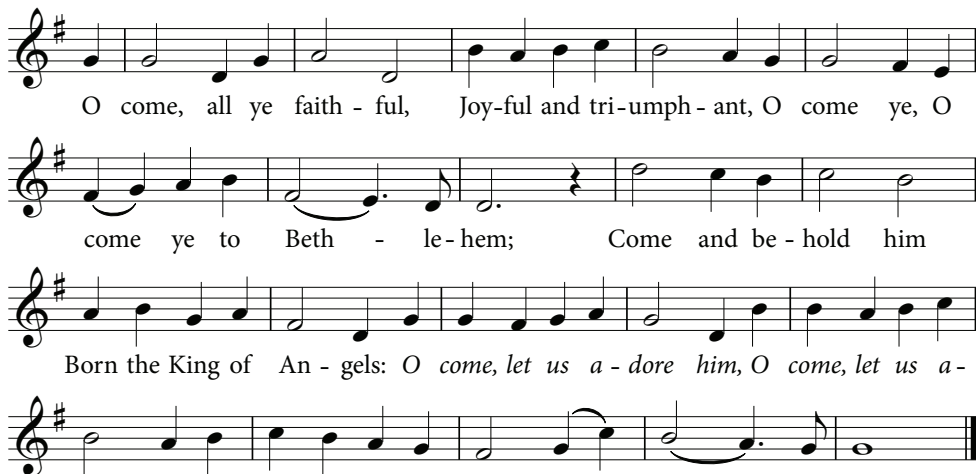
Indulgences gained may be applied to the living or the dead.

**TO MAINTAIN A SPIRIT OF REVERENCE AND SOLEMNITY,
PLEASE TURN OFF AND REFRAIN FROM USING ALL MOBILE TELEPHONES
AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES.**

ORDER OF MASS

At the sound of the Sacristy bell all stand and sing

THE HYMN



O come, all ye faith - ful, Joy-ful and tri-umph - ant, O come ye, O
come ye to Beth - le - hem; Come and be - hold him
Born the King of An - gels: O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a -
dore him, O come, let us a - dore him, — Christ — the Lord!

2

**Sing, choirs of Angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
Glory to God
In the highest:**

*O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!*

3

**Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
Born this happy morning,
Jesu, to thee be glory given;
Word of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing:**

*O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!*

Adeste fideles

John Francis Wade's MS book c. 1740

arr. David Hill (b. 1957)

Latin, 18th century

tr. Frederick Oakley (1802–1880)

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

The Choir sings the INTROIT

Cf. Isaiah 9:5; Psalm 97

PUER natus est nobis, et filius datus est nobis: cuius imperium super humerum eius: et vocabitur nomen eius, magni consilii Angelus. ƿ. Cantate Domino canticum novum: quia mirabilia fecit.

A child is born for us, and a son is given to us; his sceptre of power rests upon his shoulder, and his name will be called Messenger of great counsel. ƿ. Sing a new song to the Lord, for he has worked wonders.

All make the Sign of the Cross as the Archbishop says

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

℟: **Amen.**

Peace be with you.

℟: **And with your spirit.**

PENITENTIAL ACT

The Archbishop says

Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

After a brief silence all say

I CONFESS to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have Igreatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,

All strike their breast thrice, saying

**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.**

The Archbishop gives the absolution, saying

MAY blessed Mary, ever-Virgin, the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and all the Saints assist you with their merits and prayers. May the almighty and merciful Lord forgive you and free you from all your sins. May he help you persevere in fruitful penance, good example, and sincere charity, and lead you to everlasting life.

℟: **Amen.**

The Choir sings the KYRIE and GLORIA

from Missa Sancti Nicolai

Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)

Kyrie, eleison. Christe, eleison. Kyrie, eleison.

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

Gloria in excelsis Deo
et in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis.

Laudamus te,

benedicimus te,

adoramus te,

glorificamus te,

gratias agimus tibi

propter magnam gloriam tuam,

Domine Deus, Rex cælestis,

Deus Pater omnipotens.

Domine Fili Unigenite, Iesu Christe,

Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris,

qui tollis peccata mundi,

miserere nobis;

qui tollis peccata mundi,

suscipe deprecationem nostram.

Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,

miserere nobis.

Quoniam tu solus Sanctus,

tu solus Dominus,

tu solus Altissimus,

Iesu Christe,

cum Sancto Spiritu:

in gloria 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 Archbishop says the COLLECT

℟: Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING

Isaiah 52:7-10

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 97:1-6 Rŕ. v.0



R̄. All the ends of the earth have seen the sal-va-tion of our God.

Sing a new song to the Lord
for he has worked wonders.
His right hand and his holy arm
have brought salvation. R.

The Lord has made known his salvation;
has shown his justice to the nations.
He has remembered his truth and love
for the house of Israel. R.

All the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation of our God.
Shout to the Lord, all the earth,
ring out your joy. R.

Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp
with the sound of music.
With trumpets and the sound of the horn
acclaim the King, the Lord. **R.**

SECOND READING

Hebrews 1:1-6

The Choir sings the ALLELUIA

Alleluia.

℣ Dies sanctificatus illuxit nobis: venite gentes, et adorate Dominum: quia hodie descendit lux magna super terram.

A hallowed day has dawned upon us. Come, you nations, worship the Lord, for today a great light has shone down upon the earth.

Alleluia.

GOSPEL

John 1:1-18

The Lord be with you.

℟ **And with your spirit.**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

℟ **Glory to you, O Lord.**

At the conclusion of the Gospel:

The Gospel of the Lord.

℟ **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

THE HOMILY

is given by

The Most Reverend Anthony Fisher OP

Archbishop of Sydney

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,

ALL KNEEL during the following line:

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

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

The Choir sings the OFFERTORY MOTET

Mack Wilberg (b. 1955)

DING! dong! merrily on high in heav'n the bells are ringing! Ding! dong! verily
the sky is riv'n with angels singing!

Gloria! Hosanna in excelsis!

E'en so here below, 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!

The Archbishop says

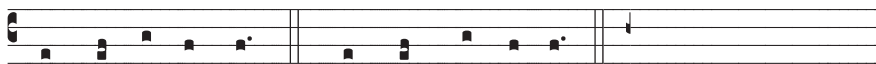
Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters), that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable
to God, the almighty Father.

℟: **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 holy Church.**

The Archbishop says the PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

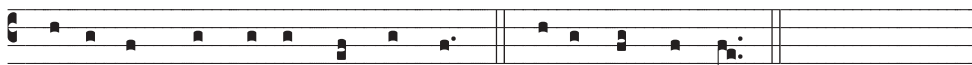
℟: **Amen.**

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

T
HE Lord be with you. ℟: **And with your spi-rit.**



Lift up your hearts. ℟: **We lift them up to the Lord.**



Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. ℟: **It is right and just.**

THE PREFACE

S An- ctus, * Sanctus, San- ctus Dó- mi-nus De- us Sá-
 Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.

ba-oth. Ple-ni sunt cæ- li et ter- ra gló- ri- a tu- a. Ho- sánna in excél-
 Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

sis. Be-ne-dí- ctus qui ve- nit in nó-mi-ne Dó-mi-ni. Ho- sán- na in
 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in

ex-cél- sis.
 the highest.

When the Archbishop sings

The mystery of faith.

All sing

W^R E proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Re-sur-rection
 until you come a-gain.

When the Archbishop sings

Through him, and with him, and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour is yours, for ever and ever.

All respond

A-men.

COMMUNION RITE

At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

All sing

O UR 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 dai-ly bread,
and forgive us our trespasses, as we for-give those who trespass a-gainst us;
and lead us not in-to temp-ta-tion, but de-liv-er us from e- vil.

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, graciously grant peace in our days, that, by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.


℟: For the kingdom, the power and the glo-ry are yours now and for ev-er.

Lord Jesus Christ, who 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 graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will. Who live and reign for ever and ever.


℟: Amen.

The peace of the Lord be with you always.


℟: And with your spirit.



A - gnus De- i, * **qui tol-lis peccá-ta mun-di: mi-se-ré- re no-bis.**
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.



A-gnus De- i, * **qui tol- lis peccá-ta mun-di: mi-se-ré- re no-bis.**
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.



A- gnus De- i, * **qui tol-lis peccá-ta mun-di: do-na no- bis pa- cem.**
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

The Archbishop shows the host to the congregation, saying

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

℟: Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Catholics who have made the proper spiritual and sacramental preparation may come forward in the procession to receive Holy Communion.

The sacred host must be consumed in the presence of the communion minister.

The Choir sings the COMMUNION ANTIPHON

cf. Psalm 97:3

Viderunt omnes fines terrae salutare Dei nostri.

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

The Choir sings the COMMUNION MOTET

John Rutter (b. 1945)

BORN in a stable so bare, born so long ago;
 Born 'neath light of star he who loved us so.

*Far away silent he lay, born today, your homage pay,
 For Christ is born for aye, born on Christmas Day.*

*Cradled by mother so fair, tender her lullaby;
 Over her son so dear angel hosts fill the sky.*

*Wise men from distant far land, shepherds from starry hills
 Worship this babe so rare, hearts with his warmth he fills.*

*Love in that stable was born into our hearts to flow;
 Innocent dreaming babe, make me thy love to know.*

All sing

THE HYMN



O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we_ see thee lie!



A - bove thy deep and dream-less_sleep The si - lent_stars go by.



Yet_ in thy dark streets shi - neth The ev - er - last-ing light;



The hopes and fears of all_ the_years Are met in_ thee to - night.

The Choir alone sings

2

O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth;
For Christ is born of Mary
And, gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.

3

How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings 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.

All sing

4

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 glad tidings tell:
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel.

English traditional

arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)

Descant, Thomas Armstrong (1898–1994)

Phillips Brooks (1835–1893)

The Archbishop says the PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

℟: **Amen.**

THE CONCLUDING RITES

The Deacon announces the Apostolic Blessing, saying

The Most Reverend Father, Anthony, by the grace of God and the Apostolic See, Bishop of this holy Church of Sydney, will give the Apostolic Blessing with a plenary indulgence, in the name of the Roman Pontiff, to all present who are truly penitent and have confessed their sins and received Holy Communion. Pray to God for our Most Holy Father, Pope Leo, our Archbishop, Anthony, and for holy Mother Church and strive, by holiness of life, to walk in full communion with it.

The Lord be with you.

℟: **And with your spirit.**

Bow down for the blessing.

May the God of infinite goodness, who by the Incarnation of his Son has driven darkness from the world and by that glorious Birth has illumined this most holy day, drive far from you the darkness of vice and illumine your hearts with the light of virtue.

℟: **Amen.**

May God, who willed that the great joy of his Son's saving Birth be announced to shepherds by the Angel, fill your minds with the gladness he gives and make you heralds of his Gospel.

℟: **Amen.**

And may God, who by the Incarnation brought together the earthly and heavenly realm, fill you with the gift of his peace and favour and make you sharers with the Church in heaven.

℟: **Amen.**

Through the intercession of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, may almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

℟: **Amen.**

Go forth, the Mass is ended.

℟: **Thanks be to God.**

All sing

THE HYMN



Hark! the he - rald an - gels sing_ Glo - ry to the new born King;
Peace on earth and mer - cy mild,_ God and sin - ners re - con-ciled:
Joy - ful all ye na - tions rise,_ Join the tri-umph of the skies,_
With th'an - ge - lic host pro - claim, Christ is_ born in Beth - le - hem.
Hark! the he - rald an - gels sing Glo - ry_ 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! the herald Angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.*

*Mendelssohn
Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809–1847)
Descant, Simon Niemiński*

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 man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth:

*Hark! the herald Angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.*

*Charles Wesley (1707–1788)
and others*

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

Toccata 'Vom himmel hoch'

Garth Edmundson (1892–1971)



THE CATHEDRAL CHOIR

St Mary's Cathedral Choir is the oldest musical institution in Australia. In 1818 a group of choristers was formed to sing Vespers before the Blessed Sacrament in the Dempsey household, the centre of Catholic worship in the penal colony. After the establishment of St Mary's Cathedral in 1833 the successors of these choristers formed the permanent Cathedral Choir. In faithfulness to the Benedictine English tradition from which the Cathedral's founders came, the Choir was formed of men and boys, preserving the historical character of Catholic liturgical and musical heritage. However, from 2025, St Mary's began a girls' choir, and St Mary's is the only Catholic Cathedral in Australia to have an on-site Choir School where the boy and girl choristers are educated. The other parts of the Choir are provided by lay clerks who are professional singers. The Choir's primary function is to sing Vespers and Mass in the Cathedral which it does almost daily, but it has also undertaken several international tours, recordings and concert projects.

www.stmaryscathedral.org.au/music

**The Cathedral Choir will be in recess after Christmas
Regular choral services will resume on Sunday 2 February 2026**

