

**Metropolitan Cathedral  
of Christ the King Liverpool**

# **SOLEMN MASS ON CHRISTMAS DAY**

**CELEBRANT  
THE MOST REVEREND JOHN SHERRINGTON  
ARCHBISHOP OF LIVERPOOL**

**THURSDAY 25 DECEMBER 2025 AT 11.00AM**

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## ORDER OF MUSIC

Entrance Carol *O come, all ye faithful*: melody by J F Wade (1711-1786); arranged by Sir David Willcocks (1919-2015)

Introit *Puer natus est*: Gregorian Chant; words from Isaiah 9:6

Gloria and Sanctus *Mass in G*: music by Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Psalm 97 and Alleluia: music by Philip Duffy (b1943)

Credo III: Gregorian Chant, with *Et incarnatus* by Philip Duffy

Offertory Motet *Ding dong! merrily on high*: music by Mack Wilberg (b1955)

Memorial Acclamation and Great Amen: music Missal Tones

Agnus Dei *Mass VIII*: music Gregorian Chant

Communion Motets *Missi cælo super nos*: music by Gevaert; *Away in a manger*: music by Ola Gjeilo (b1978)

Communion Carol *Hark! the herald angels sing*: words by C Wesley, T Whitefield, M Madan and others; music by Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847), arranged by Sir David Willcocks

Organ Voluntary *Carillon-Sortie* by Henri Mulet (1878-1967)

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### PLEASE ENSURE THAT MOBILE TELEPHONES ARE SWITCHED OFF

The use of private cameras, video or sound recording equipment  
is strictly prohibited in the Cathedral

*Today's 11.00am Christmas Day Mass will be recorded and live-streamed. The recording will be shown live on YouTube, and a copy of the recording will be available on this platform. Should you wish not to be filmed, please speak to Cathedral Security or one of the Stewards, who will direct you to a seat in the West Gallery. For more details, please email [dataprotection@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:dataprotection@rcaol.org.uk)*

[www.liverpoolmetrocathedral.org.uk](http://www.liverpoolmetrocathedral.org.uk)

## INTRODUCTORY RITES

### ENTRANCE CAROL *all stand and join in singing*



- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>1</b> O come, all ye faithful,<br/>Joyful and triumphant,<br/>O come, ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;<br/>Come and behold him<br/>Born the King of Angels:<br/>    O come, let us adore him,<br/>    O come, let us adore him,<br/>    O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!</p> <p><b>2</b> God of God,<br/>Light of Light,<br/>Lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;<br/>Very God,<br/>Begotten, not created:<br/>    O come, let us adore him...</p> | <p><b>3</b> Sing, choirs of Angels,<br/>Sing in exultation,<br/>Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;<br/>Glory to God<br/>In the Highest:<br/>    O come, let us adore him...</p> <p><b>4</b> Yea, Lord we greet thee,<br/>Born this happy morning,<br/>Jesu, to thee be glory given;<br/>Word of the Father,<br/>Now in flesh appearing:<br/>    O come, let us adore him...</p> |
|---|---|

### INTROIT *the Choir sings*

Puer natus est nobis,  
et filius datus est nobis:  
cuius imperium super humerum eius: et  
vocabitur nomen eius,  
magni consilii Angelus.

*A child is born for us,  
a son given to us;  
dominion is laid on his shoulder,  
and he shall be called  
Wonderful-Counsellor.*

### INTRODUCTION *the Archbishop says*

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

**R. Amen.**

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**R. And with your spirit.**

*He then introduces the Mass.*

## PENITENTIAL RITE

Lord Jesus, you are mighty God and Prince of peace:

Lord, have mercy.

**R. Lord, have mercy.**

You are the Son of God and the Son of Mary:

Christ, have mercy.

**R. Christ, have mercy.**

You are Word made flesh, the splendour of the Father:

Lord, have mercy.

**R. Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy on us,

forgive us our sins,

and bring us to everlasting life.

**R. Amen.**

## GLORIA *the Choir sings*

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

Laudamus te. Benedicimus te.

Adoramus te. Glorificamus te.

Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam  
gloriam tuam.

Domine Deus, Rex coelestis,

Deus Pater omnipotens.

Domine Fili unigenite Jesu 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, Jesu 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 thanks to you 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.*

## COLLECT

O God, who wonderfully created the dignity of human nature

and still more wonderfully restored it,

grant, we pray,

that we may share in the divinity of Christ,

who humbled himself to share in our humanity.

Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, for ever and ever.

**R. Amen.**

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

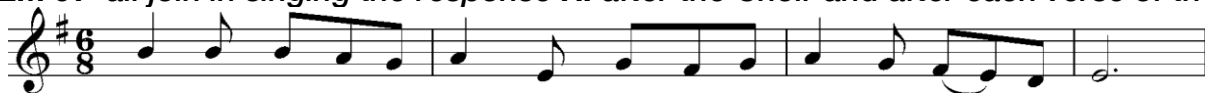
### FIRST READING *from the prophet Isaiah 52:7-10*

How beautiful upon the mountains  
are the feet of him who brings good news,  
who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness,  
who publishes salvation,  
who says to Sion, 'Your God reigns.'  
The voice of your watchmen - they lift up their voice;  
together they sing for joy;  
for eye to eye they see  
the return of the Lord to Sion.  
Break forth together into singing,  
you waste places of Jerusalem,  
for the Lord has comforted his people;  
he has redeemed Jerusalem  
The Lord has bared his holy arm  
before the eyes of all the nations,  
and all the ends of the earth shall see  
the salvation of our God.

The Word of the Lord.

**R.** Thanks be to God.

### PSALM 97 *all join in singing the response R. after the Choir and after each verse of the psalm*



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** *from the letter to the Hebrews 1:1-6*

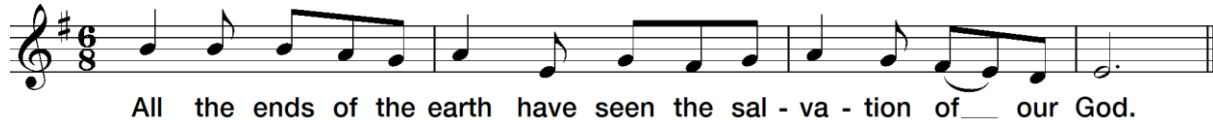
Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say, 'You are my Son, today I have begotten you'? Or again, 'I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son'? And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, 'Let all God's angels worship him.'

The Word of the Lord.

**R.** Thanks be to God.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** *the Deacon carries the Book of Gospels in procession to the lectern. When the Choir sings, all stand and join in acclaiming the Gospel by singing the response R. as before*

*Choir*



Alleluia, alleluia! A hallowed day has dawned upon us, alleluia. **R.**

Come you nations, worship the Lord, for today a great light has shone down upon the earth. Alleluia. **R.**

## **GOSPEL**

The Lord be with you.

**R.** And with your spirit.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John 1:1-18

**R.** Glory to you, O Lord.

In the beginning was the Word,  
and the Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.  
He was in the beginning with God.  
All things were made through him,  
and without him was not any thing made that was made.  
In him was life, and the life was the light of men.  
The light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.  
He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light,  
that all might believe through him.  
He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

The true light, which gives light to everyone,  
was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world was made through him,  
yet the world did not know him.  
He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.  
But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name,  
he gave the right to become children of God,  
who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh  
nor of the will of man, but of God.  
And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,  
and we have seen his glory,  
glory as of the Only Begotten from the Father,  
full of grace and truth.  
John bore witness about him, and cried out,  
‘This was he of whom I said,  
“He who comes after me ranks before me,  
because he was before me.”’

For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.  
For the law was given through Moses;  
grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.  
No one has ever seen God;  
the only begotten God, who is at the Father’s side,  
he has made him known.

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

*All sing together, as before:*  
**R. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.**

**HOMILY** *Archbishop John Sherrington*

**CREDO III** *all join in singing the verses in bold type*

v. **C**redo in unum De-um, Patrem omnipotentem, factorem caeli et terrae, vi-si-bi-li-um omnium,  
et in-vi-si-bi-li-um. **Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum, Fi-li-um De-i u-ni-ge-ni-tum.**

Et ex Patre na- tum ante omni-a sae-cu-la. **Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, Deum verum**  
**de Deo vero.** Genitum, non fa- ctum, con-sub-tan-ti-alem Patri, per quem om-ni-a facta sunt.

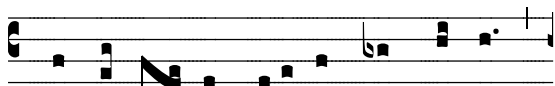


Qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram sa-lu-tem descendit de caelis.

*All kneel as the Choir sings*

Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine: Et homo factus est.

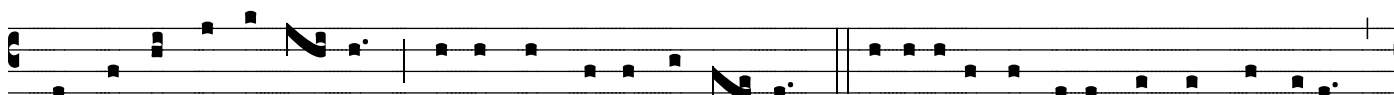
*All stand and join in singing the verses in bold type*



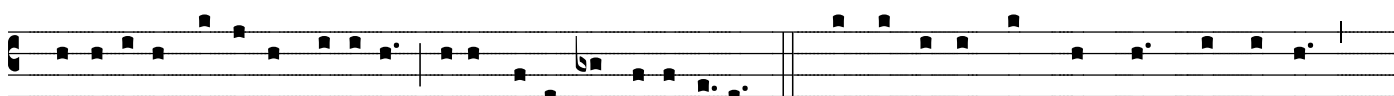
**Cru-ci-fi- xus et-i-am pro no- bis:**



**sub Ponti-o Pi- la-to passus, et sepul- tus est.** Et resurrexit ter-ti- a di-e, secundum Scripturas.



**Et ascendit in caelum : sedet ad dexteram Pa- tris.** Et i-terum venturus est cum Glo-ri-a,



iu-di-ca-re vivos et mortuos : cuius regni non er-it fi-nis. **Et in Spi-ri-tum Sanctum, Do-mi-num,**



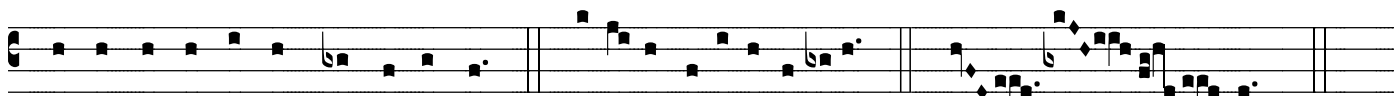
**et vi-vi- fi-can-tem: qui ex Patre Fi-li- oque procedit.** Qui cum Patre et Fi-li-o si-mul a-do-ra-tur



et con-glo-ri-fi-ca-tur: qui lo-cu-tus est per Prophetas. **Et unam sanctam catho-li-cam et a-po-**



**sto-li-cam Eccle-si-am.** Con-fi-te-or unum baptisma in remissi-o-nem peccatorum. **Et exspecto**



**re-surrecti-onem mortu-o-rum.** Et vitam venturi saeculi. **A- men.**



## **PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL** *the Archbishop begins*

On this day when the goodness and kindness of God our Saviour have appeared, let us, humbly pour forth to him our prayers, trusting not in our own works, but in his mercy.

*A Reader continues*

For the Church of God, that she may welcome with joy, the child Jesus, whom the immaculate Virgin conceived by a word and wondrously brought to birth.

Lord, in your mercy. **R. Hear our prayer.**

For the progress and peace of the whole world, that what is given in time may become a reward in eternity.

Lord, in your mercy. **R. Hear our prayer.**

For those oppressed by hunger, sickness or loneliness, that through the mystery of the Nativity of Christ they may find relief in both mind and body.

Lord, in your mercy. **R. Hear our prayer.**

For the families of our congregation, that the Lord will bless them at this time and watch over those who cannot be with their loved ones for Christmas.

Lord, in your mercy. **R. Hear our prayer.**

For our deceased loved ones, especially those who have died during the course of this year.

Lord, in your mercy. **R. Hear our prayer.**

To Mary, who pondered the events of this night in her heart, we pray:

**Hail Mary....**

*The Archbishop concludes*

We pray, O Lord our God,  
that the Virgin Mary,  
who merited to bear God and man in her chaste womb,  
may commend the prayers of your faithful in your sight.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**R. Amen.**

## **LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST**

**PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS** *a collection is taken for the upkeep of the Cathedral or please use the QR codes at the back of the booklet. The gifts are carried forward in procession. Meanwhile the Choir sings*

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, steeple bells are swungen, and io, io, io, by priest and people  
sungen. Gloria, hosanna in excelsis!

Pray you dutifully prime your matin chime, ye ringers; may you beautifully rhyme your  
evetime song, ye singers. Gloria, hosanna in excelsis!

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

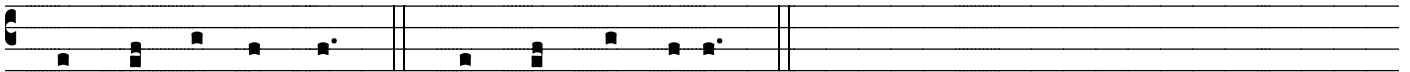
**R. May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands  
for the praise and glory of his name,  
for our good and the good of all his holy Church.**

### **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

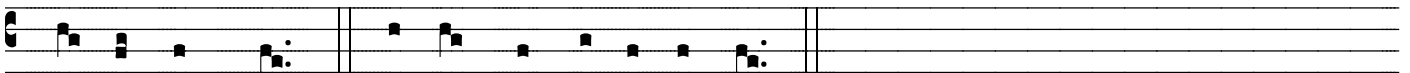
Make acceptable, O Lord, our oblation on this solemn day,  
when you manifested the reconciliation  
that makes us wholly pleasing in your sight  
and inaugurated for us the fullness of divine worship.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**R. Amen.**

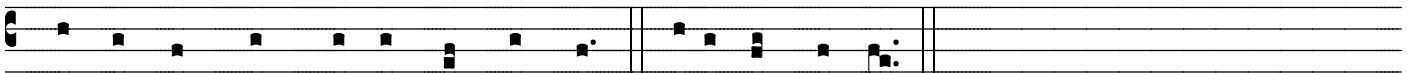
### **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**



The Lord be with you.      And with your spirit.



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.

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in the mystery of the Word made flesh  
a new light of your glory has shone upon the eyes of our mind,  
so that, as we recognise in him God made visible,  
we may be caught up through him  
in love of things invisible.

And so, with Angels and Archangels,  
with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of your glory,  
as without end we acclaim:

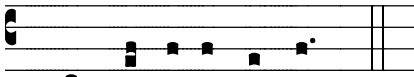
*The Choir sings*

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus Dominus,  
Deus Sabaoth.  
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.  
Hosanna in excelsis.

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

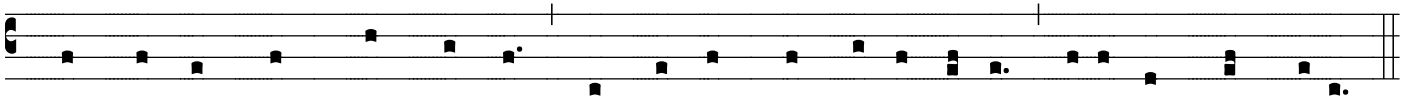
*The Eucharistic Prayer is continued.*

#### **MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION** *the Archbishop sings*



The mystery of faith.

*All join in singing*



We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection, until you come again.

*The Eucharistic Prayer is continued.*

#### **GREAT AMEN** *all join in singing*



A-men. A-men. A- men.

#### **COMMUNION RITE**

*All stand and the Archbishop invites everyone to join in saying the Lord's Prayer*

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 Archbishop continues*

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.

**R. For the kingdom,  
the power and the glory are yours  
now and for ever.**

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.

**R. Amen.**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**R. And with your spirit.**

*A Deacon invites everyone to exchange a sign of peace with those nearby.*

**AGNUS DEI** *all join in singing*



**A** - gnus De- i, \* qui tol- lis pec- ca- ta mun- di: mi- se- re- re no- bis.

A- gnus De- i, \* qui tol- lis pec- ca- ta mun- di: mi- se- re- re no- bis.

A- gnus De- i, \* qui tol- lis pec- ca- ta mun- di: do- na no- bis pa- cem.

*Then all kneel and the Archbishop says*

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.

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

*Those who are not Roman Catholic, or do not wish to receive communion, are welcome to come forward in spiritual communion. Crossing your arms across your chest will indicate to the priest or eucharistic minister that you would welcome his or her words of spiritual communion.*

**COMMUNION MOTETS** *the Choir sings*

Missi cælo super nos,  
properate, angeli,  
nuntiate nuntiate vos  
natum nostri Dominum!

*Gloria, in excelsis Deo!*

Cur pastores iubilant?  
Unde haec tot carmina  
Dum per noctem vigilant?  
Unde illa lumina?

Ite visum, populi,  
Novum regem hominum!  
Adorate, populi,  
adorate Dominum!

*The Choir sings*

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head. The stars in the bright 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 side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you 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.

*Angels we have heard on high  
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply  
Echoing their joyous strains.*

*Gloria, in excelsis Deo!*

*Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be  
Which inspire your heavenly song?*

*Come to Bethlehem and see  
Him whose birth the angels sing;  
Come, adore on bended knee,  
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.*

**COMMUNION CAROL** *all join in singing*



- 1** 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 th'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! the herald angels...
- 3** Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Son 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...

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Grant, O merciful God,  
that, just as the Saviour of the world, born this day,  
is the author of divine generation for us,  
so he may be the giver even of immortality.  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.  
**R. Amen.**

## **CONCLUDING RITE**

### **SOLEMN BLESSING** *the Archbishop begins*

The Lord be with you.  
**R. And with your spirit.**

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.  
**R. Amen.**

May God, who willed that 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.  
**R. 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.  
**R. Amen.**

And may the blessing of almighty God,  
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
come down on you and remain with you for ever.  
**R. Amen.**

### **DISMISSAL** *the Deacon says*

Go in peace.  
**R. Thanks be to God.**

## **ORGAN VOLUNTARY**

If you are concerned about the safety of a child or vulnerable adult and feel they are in immediate danger, please call the police. If you wish to report any non-urgent concerns, please contact your local social services or our safeguarding team direct at



or Mark Robson 0151 522 1013 / 07585761965 Claire Newton 0151 522 1043 /  
07384643237 or [safeguarding@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@rcaol.org.uk)

*The Dean, Clergy and Staff of the Metropolitan Cathedral wish you all a joyful, holy and peace-filled Christmas.*

*We hope you have enjoyed your time in the Cathedral.*

*Please be careful, and take your time, as you leave. Please use the handrails provided on either side of the steps, and avoid walking down the middle section.*

*Have a safe journey home.*

### **Support Us**

*We are deeply grateful for the support we receive from our congregation and visitors. Please consider making a donation in the following ways:*

- *Donate £5, £10 or £20 through our 'tap and go' machines.*
- *Text the word METROCATHEDRAL to 70460 to donate £5, or simply scan the QR codes below to make a donation of £5 or £10.*



£5



£10

*Thank you for your generosity.*

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