

Bible Class Break – Home Study Notes - The Nativity of The Lord (Christmas)

This week the related texts for our Mass readings are not noted. This is because our focus is on The Nativity of the Lord, Christmas, and there are 4 distinct liturgical celebrations depending on when you attend Mass. This translates to 12 different readings! Over the next week please read through and reflect on all the readings below.

Light is a key theme throughout the Christmas liturgies. It is also discussed in the beginning of creation on the same day that Christmas falls on this year, the 4th day/ Thursday. Therefore, in addition to the readings for The Nativity of The Lord, meditate on Gen.1:14-19 and Rev.21:24-25 as we celebrate Jubilee Christmas and enter the year 2026.

The readings for Christmas are;

	Old Testament	New Testament	Gospel
Vigil Mass	Isaiah 62:1-5	Acts 13:16-17, 22-25	Matthew 1:1-25
Mass During the Night	Isaiah 9:1-6	Titus 2:11-14	Luke 2:1-14
Mass at Dawn	Isaiah 62:11-12	Titus 3:4-7	Luke 2:15-20
Mass During the Day	Isaiah 52:7-10	Hebrews 1:1-6	John 1:1-18

Christmas is the only liturgical celebration with four Masses (*Vatican News*) Also the readings are the same every year unlike other liturgical celebrations which alternate depending on the year (A, B, C) in the liturgical cycle. Each liturgy focuses on a different aspect of the Nativity Story.

The Vigil Mass focuses on the prophetic and historical aspect as highlighted by the opening verses of the Gospel detailing the genealogy of Jesus, from Abraham to David to the Babylonian Exile to His birth. The Responsorial Psalm proclaims, “Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord,” and focuses on God’s faithfulness to His covenant promise to David.

The Mass During the Night focuses on the birth of Jesus and is the “Angel’s Mass” because of the Angel’s announcement to the shepherds. Traditionally it was held that Jesus was born at midnight, thus the Midnight Mass. The Responsorial Psalm joyfully declares, “Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord!” It encourages all of Heaven and Earth to “Sing to the Lord and bless His name,” joining our voices with the Heavenly Host!

The Mass at Dawn focuses on the response of the shepherds to the Angel’s message. Thus it is the “Shepherd’s Mass.” The reading tells us that, “They went with haste” to “see this thing that has taken place,” Then, after they saw the newborn Savior, “they made known the message that had been told them about this child,” making them the first evangelists! The Responsorial Psalm carries the message saying, “A light will shine on us this day: the Lord is born for us.”

The Mass During the Day focuses on the identity of Jesus, the Son of God, the Light of the world, the Word made flesh. This Mass is called the “King’s Mass” since it reflects on the Son of God, the King of Kings, becoming incarnate for the salvation of the world. The Responsorial Psalm proclaims His majesty saying, “All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.”

Reflect: A common theme of the Christmas liturgies is “Light.” As you have studied the Sacred Word of God where has the Light shone for you?