

Prayer Service for the Blessing of the Crib The Courts of the King

Call to Worship:

Lord, we gather together during this season of Christmas as we remember the birth of Jesus, share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the Shepherds and the worship of the Wisemen.

We praise you in prayer and song for the great wonders you have sent us: for shining stars, for angels' songs, for Mary and Joseph and for the Word made flesh in Jesus.

Christmas Hymn: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel!

Reading from the Christmas Gospel of Saint Luke

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.

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 Messiah 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.

Blessing of the Christmas crib and figurines

Leader:

As we sprinkle with Holy water, we ask God's blessing upon this Christmas manger and upon ourselves:

Lord, bless these nativity figures and all who look upon this manger. May it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus and raise our thoughts to Him who is God-with-us and Savior of all and who lives and reigns forever and ever.
Amen

Choosing of the Courts of the King: Music played softly
(Each student will come forward to choose a symbol of Jesus' birth at Christmas. When all have received this symbol, please be seated)

Prayers for each symbol (When your symbol is called, please stand)

Star: The star shone brightly in the sky pointing to where Jesus was born.....May each of you be the Light of Christ always leading others to Jesus.

Crib: The crib and the straw cradled Jesus.....May each of you love Jesus with your whole heart.

Stable: Jesus was born as a tiny baby in a stable in Bethlehem in poverty and simplicity.... May each of you be a shelter for all those who need help.

Angels: The angels sang "Glory to God in the highest" to announce that Jesus was born.....May each of you sing God's praises and bring the good news to others.

Shepherds: The Shepherds heard the good news and went to the place where Jesus was born.....May each of you listen to Jesus speaking to you in your mind and in your heart.

Wisemen: The wisemen traveled for miles to bring Jesus the first Christmas presents..... May each of you be gift-givers always giving of yourself to others.

St. Joseph: St. Joseph trusted God's plan and took care of Mary and Jesus...May each of you trust in God and care for others.

Mary: Mary was chosen to be the mother of Jesus and our mother too.....May each of you see Jesus who is born in the hearts of others.

Closing Prayer:

God, our Father, you loved us even to the point of sending us your only Son, Jesus, to save us and bring us to you. We ask you to bless our parents, our families and our friends. Open our hearts so that we might know how to receive Jesus with joy, doing always what He asks, and seeing Him in all those who are in need of our love. We ask you this in the name of Jesus who came to bring peace to the world and lives and reigns with you forever. Amen.

Hymn: Joy to the World