

Church of the divine love

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

JANUARY 5, 2025 10:15 AM

HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

Please observe silence

Prayer for the New Year – on insert

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn #

Opening Acclamation page 355

Collect for Purity page 355

Gloria (sung)

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **Jeremiah 31:7-14**

Psalm 84

Second Lesson: **Ephesians 1:3-6, 15-19a**

Gradual Hymn –

Gospel: **Luke 2:41-52**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze

The Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form IV page 388

The Confession of Sin page 360

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn #

Doxology (sung)	
The Great Thanksgiving:	
Eucharistic Prayer C	page 369
Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal)	page 367
The Lord's Prayer	page 364
The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer	page 337
The Communion of the People	
Communion Hymn #	
Post Communion Prayer	page 365
Prayer for Peace – on insert	
Prayer For the Parish	page 817
Prayer of St. Francis	page 833
Dismissal Hymn #	
Dismissal	

Sermon Sunday January 5, 2025

Jeremiah 31: 7-14; Psalm 84; Ephesians 1: 3-6,15-19a; Luke 2: 41-52.

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

As parents, relatives, teachers, guardians, and friends of children we are, and rightfully should be, concerned for their well-being. We are to protect and teach them, nurture and nourish their lives, ensure their health and safety. We all need someone to guide and guard our growing up. Growing up is hard work.

Growing up means establishing our identity and figuring out our place in this world. It involves creating relationships, setting priorities, making decisions. We must choose values and beliefs that structure our lives. Along the way we make mistakes, get lost, backtrack, and sometimes just need to start over. Ultimately, growing up means moving out and finding a new home. This may be a geographical move, but most certainly it involves psychological and spiritual moves. So, it is no surprise that Mary would be in a panic when she discovers that Jesus is not with the group of travelers. With great anxiety she and Joseph search for him. Three days later the one who was lost has been found. Mary's first words are,

“Child, why have you treated us like this?” What I really hear is, where have you been young man? Your father and I did not survive angel visits, birth in a manger, and living like refugees in Egypt only to have you get lost in Jerusalem. But Jesus isn’t the one who is lost. He knows who he is and where he belongs. Mary and Joseph are the ones who are lost.

Today’s gospel is a story about growing up but it is not Jesus’ growing up. It is about Mary and Joseph growing up. It is about you and me growing up. Growing up is not about how old we are. It is really about moving into deeper and more authentic relationships with God, our world, each other, and ourselves. Jesus is the one who grows us up. He is the one who will grow up Mary and Joseph. Children have a way of doing that to their parents. They challenge us to look at our world, our lives, and ourselves in new, different, and sometimes painful ways. That is exactly what Jesus’ question to Mary does. She had put herself and Joseph at the center of Jesus’ world. His question was about to undo that. “Why were you searching for me?” he asks. “Did you not know that I must be in my father’s house?” Jesus is telling Mary she should have known where he was. It is as if he is saying, Remember, the angel told you I would be the Son of God. Remember that night in Bethlehem. Angels praising God, shepherds glorifying God. Remember the three men from the East, their gifts, and adoration. Remember Joseph’s dreams that guided us to Egypt and back. Where else could I be but here? Jesus has put the Father at the center of his world and asks Mary and us to do the same, to move to the Father’s home.

Authentic growth almost always involves letting go. Mary’s move to the Father’s house, her growing up, means that she will have to let go of her boy Jesus (**Lk. 2:43**) image. Jesus was born of Mary but he is the Father’s Son. He is with her but does not belong to her. She can give him love but not her thoughts or ways. He is about the Father’s business. Ultimately, she must strive to be like him and not make him like her. Jesus has moved from Mary and Joseph’s home to the Father’s home. This is not a rejection of his earthly parents but a re-prioritizing of relationships. It is what he would ask of Simon and Andrew, James and John. “Follow me” would be the invitation for them to leave their homes, their nets, their fathers and move to a different place, live a different life, see with different eyes. It is today what he asks of you and me. Growing up spiritually involves leaving our comfort zone, letting go of what is safe and familiar, and moving to a bigger place, to the father’s place. This letting go is a necessary detachment if we are to grow in the love and likeness of Christ. It means we must leave our own little homes.

We all live in many different homes. Homes of fear, anger, and prejudice. Homes of grief and sorrow. Homes in which we have been told or convinced that we don’t matter, that we are not enough, unacceptable, or unlovable. Homes in which we have been or continue to be hurt or wounded. Homes in which we have hurt or wounded another. Homes of indifference and apathy. Homes of sin and guilt. Homes of gossip, envy, pride. Every one of us could name the different homes in which we live, homes that keep our life small, our visions narrow, and our world empty. The problem is that sometimes we have become too comfortable in these homes. They are not our true homes. They are not the home God offers us. We may have to pass through them but we do not have to stay there. Jesus says that there is not only another home for us but invites, guides, and grows us up into that home. It is a place he knows well. It is the father’s home in which we can know ourselves and each other to be his beloved children,

created in his image and called to be like him. So why would we continue to pay rent on a place that can only impoverish us when we could move to the father's home for free? In the father's home our place at the banquet is set. It is a home in which we live in rooms of mercy, forgiveness, joy, love, beauty, generosity, compassion.

Leaving home does not necessarily mean leaving our physical or geographical home though sometimes it might. It does mean examining and re-prioritizing the values, beliefs, and relationships that establish our identity and give our life meaning and significance. It means letting go of an identity that is limited to our biological family, job, community reputation, ethnic group, or political party and trusting that who we are is who we are in God. It means that we stop relating to one another by comparison, competition, and judgment and begin relating through love, self-surrender, and vulnerability. It means that we let go of fear about the future and discover that God is here in the present and that all shall be well. We stop ruminating on past guilt, regrets, and sins and accept the mercy and forgiveness of God and each other. We see our life not in opposition to others but as intimately related to and dependent upon others. So, I wonder what are the little homes in which you live? How have they bound up your life, stifled your growth, and kept you from the father's home? What might you have to leave behind in order to grow up and move to a better place? Those can be hard questions, painful questions. Ultimately, however, they are questions founded on love.

"Child, why have you treated us like this? "Because I love you. I love you enough to grow you up, to find you when you are lost, and to bring you with me into the father's home. Your children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself. They come through you but not from you, and though they are with you yet they belong not to you. You may give them your love but not your thoughts, for they have their own thoughts. You may house their bodies but not their souls, for their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.

Every one of us has been entrusted with divine life. That is the reality of Christmas. We find it wherever we go. It is in our families, our marriages, our work, the strangers we encounter, the enemies we avoid, the oppressed and marginalized. Divine life, the presence of God, is everywhere waiting for us. That divine life, like a young child, needs to be cared for, nurtured, loved, protected, and fed in order that it might grow into its intended fullness. That is our Christmas work. Happy New Year. God's blessings as the New Year begins. **Amen.**

All baptized Christians, regardless of age, are welcome to receive communion in the Episcopal Church.

CHRISTMAS 2

10:15 AM

HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS

MONDAY – THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

8:30 PM AA MEETING

WEDNESDAY 7:00 PM AL-ANON MEETING

THURSDAY 10AM-2PM THRIFT SHOP

8:30 PM AA MEETING

SATURDAY 10AM-2PM THRIFT SHOP

1 EPIPHANY/THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

10:15 AM HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Anthony Giordano	Deb Giordano
Coffee Hour	Jess Berbeck	Prossers

SUPPORT THE FOOD PANTRY – DROP-OFF IN THE KITCHEN

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Loving God, comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation. Especially we remember before you:

Sister Eddie	Betty Curley	Jess
Bob Curley	Steve Curley	Art
Chris Dickson	John Rocco	Deb P.
John Mulligan	Marjorie Guerrier	Lynette

Manetta Family	Robert Hosey	Ryan
Christopher	Bernie Walther	Celeste
Beverly Noel	Phil Ryder	Warren
Anthony Paribello	Barbara Curran	Del
Donna A.	Kate Jones	Aidan
Sally & Roger	Sophia	Ciara
Mary & Family	Wendy	Jan
Nathan Treadwell	Gladys Hadija	Vincent
Michael & Family	Matthew Treasure	Mo
Michelle & Baby	Joseph	Annie
Jerry & Family	Shannon & Family	

All people and countries suffering from violence, hatred and natural disaster.

The homeless and food insecure.

Help us speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them.
Bring us with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen.

To add or make changes to prayer list during the week, email

Janet Croft at jmc220@optonline.net

Prayer for the New Year:

O God, our Creator, you have divided our life into days
and seasons, and called us to acknowledge your
providence year after year. Accept our praise and

thanksgiving for this past year and hear our prayers for the new year. Plant in every heart, we pray, the love of him who is the Savior of the world, Jesus. Grant that we who begin this year in his Name, may complete it to his honor and glory. Pardon our transgressions of the past and guide us by your Holy Spirit that we may turn our feet into your paths, serve you in peace, and live in your presence. All this we ask in the holy name of your Son, Jesus, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

Hymn to be sung during the consecration:

Father I adore you,
Lay my life before you,
How I love you.

(Repeat twice with second verse starting with Jesus
And third verse starting with Spirit).

Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn
but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love:
So mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that
all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince

of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominions
and glory, now and forever. Amen