

**Stations**  
of the  
**Nativity**

# Stations of the Nativity

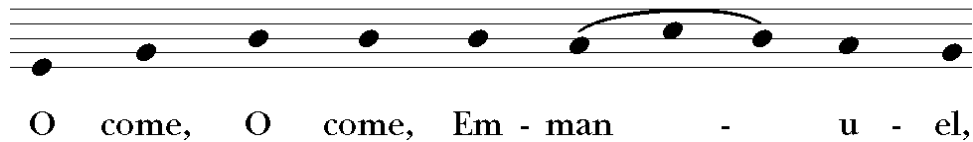
## Opening Devotions

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

*Almighty God, whose blessed Son took our human nature so that we might regain our lost innocence and be restored to the divine image that was disfigured by sin, grant that as we meditate on the mystery of his humanity we may share the glory of his divinity, who lives and reigns in the unity of the Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.*

V God sent his son into the world.

R *To bring us to eternal life.*



## First Station

### The angel Gabriel appears to Zechariah

We adore you O Christ and we bless you:

*Because by your wonderful nativity you have given us new birth.*

In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah whose wife was named Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly. But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years. Once when he was serving as priest before God . . . there appeared to him an angel of the Lord. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John." Zechariah said to the angel, "How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years." The angel replied, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur."

V Loving God, increase our faith in your abounding grace,

R *And silence all our doubts and fears.*

Let us pray.

Everliving God, strengthen us with firm and certain faith in your promise of redemption; Grant us so perfectly and without doubt to believe in Jesus Christ, our Lord and our God, that our faith may never be found wanting in your sight; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

V God sent his son into the world.

R *To bring us to eternal life.*

## Second Station

### The angel Gabriel appears to the Virgin Mary

We adore you O Christ and we bless you:

*Because by your wonderful nativity you have given us new birth.*

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a virgin whose name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

V Loving God, when it seems that we are called to do the impossible,

R *Help us to trust your power to transform us.*

Let us pray.

Pour your grace into our hearts, O Lord, that we who have known the incarnation of your Son Jesus Christ, announced by an angel to the Virgin Mary, may by his cross and passion be brought to the glory of his resurrection; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

V God sent his son into the world.

R *To bring us to eternal life.*

## Third Station

### Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth

We adore you O Christ and we bless you:

*Because by your wonderful nativity you have given us new birth.*

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

V Loving God, you call us into beloved friendships,

R *Help us to share your love.*

Let us pray.

Father in heaven, by your grace the virgin mother of your incarnate Son was blessed in bearing him, but still more blessed in keeping your word: Grant us who honor the exaltation of her lowliness to follow the example of her devotion to your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

V God sent his son into the world.

R *To bring us to eternal life.*

## Fourth Station

### Elizabeth gives birth to John the Baptist

We adore you O Christ and we bless you:

*Because by your wonderful nativity you have given us new birth.*

Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. On the eighth day her neighbors and relatives came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. But his mother said, “No; he is to be called John.” They said to her, “None of your relatives has this name.” Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him. He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, “His name is John.” And all of them were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God.

V Loving God, let your Spirit fill us with your grace

R *And open our lips so our mouths may proclaim your praise*

Let us pray.

Almighty God, by whose providence your servant John the Baptist was wonderfully born, and sent to prepare the way of your Son our Savior by preaching repentance: Make us so to follow his teaching and holy life, that we may truly repent according to his preaching; and, following his example, constantly speak the truth, boldly rebuke vice, and patiently suffer for the truth's sake; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

*Amen.*

V God sent his son into the world.

R *To bring us to eternal life.*

## Fifth Station

### An angel appears to Joseph in a dream

We adore you O Christ and we bless you:

*Because by your wonderful nativity you have given us new birth.*

When Mary was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit, her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.” When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son.

V Loving God, allow us to dream your dreams,

R *And give us the faith to follow them.*

Let us pray.

O God, who from the family of your servant David raised up Joseph to be the guardian of your incarnate Son and the spouse of his virgin mother: Give us grace to imitate his uprightness of life and his obedience to your commands; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

V God sent his son into the world.

R *To bring us to eternal life.*

## Sixth Station

### Mary gives birth to her firstborn son

We adore you O Christ and we bless you:

*Because by your wonderful nativity you have given us new birth.*

A decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

V Loving God, you come to each of us seeking a place to dwell

R *Help us to make room in our hearts for your love.*

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have given your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and to be born of a pure virgin: Grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with you and the same Spirit be honor and glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*

V God sent his son into the world.

R *To bring us to eternal life.*

## Seventh Station

### Angels appear to shepherds with tidings of great joy

We adore you O Christ and we bless you:

*Because by your wonderful nativity you have given us new birth.*

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

V Loving God, as your holy angels always serve you in heaven

R *May they help and defend us here on earth.*

Let us pray.

Everlasting God, you have ordained and constituted in a wonderful order the ministries of angels and mortals: Mercifully grant that, as your holy angels always serve and worship you in heaven, so by your appointment they may help and defend us here on earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

V God sent his son into the world.

R *To bring us to eternal life.*

## **Eighth Station**

### **Shepherds find the newborn lying in a manger**

We adore you O Christ and we bless you:

*Because by your wonderful nativity you have given us new birth.*

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

V Loving God, you sent Jesus to live among the poor,

R *Teach us to seek and serve your Son in them.*

Let us pray.

Almighty and most merciful God, we remember before you all poor and neglected persons whom it would be easy for us to forget: the homeless and destitute, the old and the sick, and all who have none to care for them. Help us to heal those who are broken in body or spirit, and to turn their sorrow into joy. Grant this, Father, for the love of your Son, who for our sake became poor, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

V God sent his son into the world.

R *To bring us to eternal life.*

## **Ninth Station**

### **Mary and Joseph name their child**

We adore you O Christ and we bless you:

*Because by your wonderful nativity you have given us new birth.*

After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

V Loving God, you knew us before we were knit in our mother's womb,

R *And you call us each by name.*

Let us pray.

Eternal Father, you gave to your incarnate Son the holy name of Jesus to be the sign of our salvation: Plant in every heart, we pray, the love of him who is the Savior of the world, our Lord Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

V God sent his son into the world.

R *To bring us to eternal life.*

## Tenth Station

### Mary and Joseph present their child in the Temple

We adore you O Christ and we bless you:

*Because by your wonderful nativity you have given us new birth.*

When the time came for their purification, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, and they offered a sacrifice according to the law of the Lord. Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." There was also a prophet, Anna, a widow of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

V Loving God, you have promised redemption through your Son;

R *May our eyes behold your kingdom come.*

Let us pray.

Almighty and everliving God, we humbly pray that, as your only-begotten Son was presented in the temple, so we may be presented to you with pure and clean hearts by Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

V God sent his son into the world.

R *To bring us to eternal life.*

## Eleventh Station

### Wise men from the East worship the newborn king

We adore you O Christ and we bless you:

*Because by your wonderful nativity you have given us new birth.*

Wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. He said, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

V Loving God, help us to seek your Son

R *And proclaim him as our sovereign Lord.*

Let us pray.

O God, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your presence, where we may see your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

V God sent his son into the world.

R *To bring us to eternal life.*

## Twelfth Station

### Joseph takes the mother and child and flees into Egypt

We adore you O Christ and we bless you:

*Because by your wonderful nativity you have given us new birth.*

Now after the Wise Men had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

V Loving God, be our protector from all danger,

R *And teach us to trust confidently in your goodness and guidance.*

Let us pray.

Look with pity, O heavenly Father, upon those who live with injustice, terror, disease, and death as their constant companions. Have mercy upon us. Help us to eliminate our cruelty to these our neighbors. So move every human heart that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

V God sent his son into the world.

R *To bring us to eternal life.*

## Thirteenth Station

### Herod's soldiers massacre Jewish infants and toddlers

We adore you O Christ and we bless you:

*Because by your wonderful nativity you have given us new birth.*

When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more."

V Loving God, lift up our hearts to abhor all forms of injustice,

R *And lift up our voices to be your witness.*

Let us pray.

We remember, O God, the slaughter of the holy innocents of Bethlehem by King Herod. Receive, we pray, into the arms of your mercy all innocent victims; and by your great might frustrate the designs of evil tyrants and establish your rule of justice, love, and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

V God sent his son into the world.

R *To bring us to eternal life.*

## Fourteenth Station

### Joseph, Mary, and Jesus return to Nazareth

We adore you O Christ and we bless you:

*Because by your wonderful nativity you have given us new birth.*

When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.”

Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth.

V Loving God, you have placed us in families for love and well being;

R *Give us the grace to love one another.*

Let us pray.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, you set the solitary in families: We commend to your continual care the homes in which your people dwell. Protect them from every danger and fill them with faith and love. Grant that we may follow the good example of the Holy Family, and let your love grow among us all the days of our lives. *Amen.*

V God sent his son into the world.

R *To bring us to eternal life.*

## After the Stations

Let us pray.

*Almighty God, grant to us, who have followed our Lord through the time of his coming to earth, the peace promised by the angels, the simple trust of the shepherds, the wise discernment of the Magi, and the love of the Holy Family in our homes and in all our lives, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.*

### The Peace

*or*

### Blessing and Dismissal

May God give you grace to follow Christ as your Savior, and bring you through the power of his Incarnation to eternal life, and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. *Amen.*

V God sent his son into the world.

R *To bring us to eternal life.*

V Let us bless the Lord.

R *Thanks be to God.*

