



LOST AND FOUND

(LUKE 2:41-52)

The colourful and poignant episode which we find in our Gospel reading today is only recounted in the Gospel of Luke. The evangelist uses it as a bridge between the account of the birth of Jesus and the beginning of his adult ministry.

He emphasises the religious observance of the couple described as “the parents of Jesus”, who were accustomed to making an annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem in order to celebrate the feast of Passover. On this occasion, the twelve-year-old Jesus decides to remain behind without informing them. They discover him in the Temple, teaching the teachers.

In spite of all the information that they have received, which we have considered over the Christmas period, about the nature of the child to be born, Mary and Joseph fail to understand Jesus’ rather enigmatic reply to his mother’s relieved but exasperated question, “Why have you done this to us? See how worried your father and I have been, looking for you.” He answers, rather abruptly, about being “busy with my Father’s affairs”. This failure to understand what Jesus says will recur in the Gospel narrative.

This incident is bracketed in Luke’s Gospel by notices about Jesus growing up in Nazareth: the verse immediately preceding today’s extract says that “he grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom and God’s favour was with him”. This wisdom is illustrated in his discussions with the teachers of the Law in the Temple. After that Jesus “went down with them then and came to Nazareth and lived under their authority”. Jesus’ human nature is very much emphasised in these passages. ■

REFLECT

Today, a child of twelve is embarking on secondary school. At the time of Jesus, a boy of twelve was probably considered able to undertake adult responsibility in religious matters and to be responsible for any vow he might make. So this story is not simply about a lost child. Only a parent can fully understand the feelings of Mary and Joseph on discovering that Jesus was missing from the company with whom they were travelling.

This story is highly charged from an emotional point of view. There is a missing child: a frantic search by anxious parents; the eventual relief at discovering that the boy is safe and sound; the perplexity at his precocious talent in holding an apparently impressive discussion with well-qualified experts in their own field. Then there is the first indication that the adolescent has a mind of his own, that he senses a calling of which his parents have no inkling or understanding, but the family relationship continues until the appropriate time.

To be a married person, a parent, is just as much a vocation as to be a priest or religious sister or brother, and just as demanding – or more so. This feast reminds us that most Christians are called to be committed partners in marriage and parenthood, and should be honoured as such. Like Mary, maybe we should “store up all these things in our hearts”. ■

Nativity scene from front façade of the Cathedral of St Wenceslas in Olomouc, Czech Republic

SAY

Blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways.

(Psalm 127:1)

LEARN

The average life expectancy at the time of Jesus was around 35 years.

A boy (*sic*) of twelve was considered able to undertake adult religious responsibilities.

The depiction of Joseph as an elderly man has no basis in the Gospel tradition.

DO

Put out your crib figures of Mary, Joseph and the child Jesus. Reflect that most Christians are called to live out our faith as married and family members.



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

The shepherds went in haste,
and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant
lying in a manger.

GLORIA

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 you thanks 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 were pleased to give us
the shining example of the Holy Family,
graciously grant that we may imitate them
in practising the virtues of family life and in
the bonds of charity,
and so, in the joy of your house,
delight one day in eternal rewards.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of
the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING 1 Samuel 1:20-22. 24-28

A reading from the first book of Samuel.

Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son,
and called him Samuel "since" she said "I
asked the Lord for him."

When a year had gone by, the husband
Elkanah went up again with all his family to
offer the annual sacrifice to the Lord and to
fulfil his vow. Hannah, however, did not go
up, having said to her husband, "Not before
the child is weaned. Then I will bring him and
present him before the Lord and he shall stay
there for ever."

When she had weaned him, she took him
up with her together with a three-year-old
bull, an ephah of flour and a skin of wine, and
she brought him to the temple of the Lord at
Shiloh; and the child was with them. They
slaughtered the bull and the child's mother
came to Eli. She said, "If you please, my lord.
As you live, my lord, I am the woman who
stood here beside you, praying to the Lord.
This is the child I prayed for, and the Lord
granted me what I asked him. Now I make
him over to the Lord for the whole of his life.
He is made over to the Lord."

There she left him, for the Lord.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalms 83

Response:

**They are happy who dwell in your house,
O Lord.**

- How lovely is your dwelling place
Lord, God of hosts.
My soul is longing and yearning,
is yearning for the courts of the Lord.
My heart and my soul ring out their joy
to God, the living God. (R.)
- They are happy, who dwell in your house,
for ever singing your praise.
They are happy, whose strength is in you;
they walk with ever growing strength. (R.)
- O Lord, God of hosts, hear my prayer,
give ear, O God of Jacob.
Turn your eyes, O God, our shield,
look on the face of your anointed. (R.)

SECOND READING 1 John 3:1-2. 21-24

A reading from the first letter of St John.

Think of the love that the Father has lavished
on us,
by letting us be called God's children;
and that is what we are.

Because the world refused to acknowledge
him,
therefore it does not acknowledge us.

My dear people, we are already the children
of God

but what we are to be in the future has not
yet been revealed,
all we know is, that when it is revealed
we shall be like him
because we shall see him as he really is.

My dear people,
if we cannot be condemned by our own
conscience,
we need not be afraid in God's presence,
and whatever we ask him
we shall receive,

because we keep his commandments
and live the kind of life that he wants.

His commandments are these:
that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus
Christ

and that we love one another
as he told us to.

Whoever keeps his commandments
lives in God and God lives in him.

We know that he lives in us
by the Spirit that he has given us.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

**Open our heart, O Lord,
to accept the words of your Son.
Alleluia!**

GOSPEL

Luke 2:41-52

A reading from the holy Gospel according to
Luke.

Every year the parents of Jesus used to go
to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover.
When he was twelve years old, they went
up for the feast as usual. When they were
on their way home after the feast, the boy
Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem without
his parents knowing it. They assumed he
was with the caravan, and it was only after a

day's journey that they went to look for him
among their relations and acquaintances.
When they failed to find him they went back
to Jerusalem looking for him everywhere.

Three days later, they found him in the
Temple, sitting among the doctors, listening
to them and asking them questions; and all
those who heard him were astounded at
his intelligence and his replies. They were
overcome when they saw him, and his
mother said to him, "My child, why have you
done this to us? See how worried your father
and I have been, looking for you." "Why were
you looking for me?" he replied. "Did you not
know that I must be busy with my Father's
affairs?" But they did not understand what he
meant.

He then went down with them and came to
Nazareth and lived under their authority. His
mother stored up all these things in her heart.
And Jesus increased in wisdom, in stature,
and in favour with God and men.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

**I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,**

(all bow during the next two lines)

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the
Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living
and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.
Amen.**

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

We offer you, Lord, the sacrifice of
conciliation,
humbly asking that,
through the intercession of the Virgin Mother
of God and Saint Joseph,
you may establish our families firmly in your
grace and your peace.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

**Our God has appeared on the earth, and
lived among us.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Bring those you refresh with this heavenly
Sacrament,
most merciful Father,
to imitate constantly the example of the Holy
Family,
so that, after the trials of this world,
we may share their company for ever.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.



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MASSES and INTENTIONS: December 2021/January 2022	
Sat 25th 8.00am	CHRISTMAS DAY <i>Ind Cremin RIP</i>
Sat 25th 10.00am	CHRISTMAS DAY <i>Panel Stojewski (Birthday)</i>
Sat 25th N.B. No Sunday Vigil Mass	
Sun 26th 8.00am	THE HOLY FAMILY <i>Anthony Clark RIP</i>
Sun 26th 10.00am	THE HOLY FAMILY <i>The Parish</i>
Sun 26th 11.30am	BAPTISM Alan Leepak
Mon 27th 9.15am	ST JOHN APOSTLE <i>Celia Pritchard (well being)</i>
Tue 28th 9.15am	THE HOLY INNOCENTS <i>Danny West RIP</i>
Wed 29th 1.00pm	ST THOMAS BECKET <i>Catherine Hall</i>
Thu 30th 9.15am	The Octave of Christmas <i>Victor Hill RIP (100th Birthday)</i>
Fri 31st 1.00pm	The Octave of Christmas <i>Cheriyath Joseph RIP</i>
Sat 1st 10.30am	MARY, HOLY MOTHER OF GOD <i>EBC</i>
January 1st	MOTHER OF GOD <i>Dwarka Prasad RIP (Vigil)</i>
Sat 1st 6.00pm	2ND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS <i>The Parish (Vigil)</i>
Sun 2nd 8.00am	2ND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS <i>The Parish</i>
Sun 2nd 10.00am	2ND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS <i>Phillip Cook (amtrv)</i>
Lately Dead	Danny West <i>Maureen McCaughy</i>
Remembrance:	
Francis Trevor	Timothy O'Connor <i>Joseph Lauria</i>
Doris Cripps	Christina Wiltymman <i>Francis Dullehan</i>
Patrick Jeffers	Anna (Hannah) Stevens <i>Bill Mills</i>
Angela Rosier	Pierina Gallagher <i>Rhs Clement</i>
Patrick King	Winifred Satterfield <i>Vera Franklin</i>
Thomas Morgan	Desmond Davies <i>Nora Mills</i>
Please Pray For The Sick	
Pat England	Mary Elizabeth <i>William Fawcett</i>
Celia Pritchard	Kathleen Hanna <i>Ann Currie</i>
Lynne Howells	Alena Liskova <i>Flo Brown</i>
Margaret Skelding	Micad Jasari <i>Nicola Merrick</i>
Monica Cook	Fr. Andrew <i>St. Mary Francis</i>
Kevin Roberts	Martin O'Connor <i>Joan Colley</i>
Daniel Birt	

During Advent and Christmaside, we are invited to pray for Migrants and Refugees and for Expectant Mothers.

In the Cycle of Prayer: this week we remember Saint Joseph, Penarth

Readings for this week
Sunday Year C **Psalter Week 1**

6.00pm	Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist	Ministers of the Word
8.00am	No Vigil Mass	No Vigil Mass
10.00am	Frances Heterley	Dorothy Kennedy
	Mia Brennan	Deidre Schofield

We welcome into God's family Alan Leepak who will be baptised this Sunday at 11.30am.

Parish 200 Club Renewals and new Prize Fund. From January 2022 the monthly prize fund will increase as follows: 1st £30; 2nd £20; 3rd £10. We hope you will continue to support the 200 club in 2022 and look forward to receiving your renewals and requests for new numbers. Please send a cheque for £12 per number (cheques payable to St Francis Xavier's 200 Club) to the church in an envelope with your name on it and stating **200 Club**. (If you pay by standing order you do not need to do anything). Anyone who **banks online can pay direct** to...: **Santander, 09-06-66 acc. 42516221 St Francis Xavier's Church**. Please put your name as reference and let me know by email to confirm that you have done so. If you require information on your payments, e.g. how many numbers you have, please call 850414 or email dejiwilliams@gmail.com Best wishes Paul and Brenda Williams

Due to the recent Corona Virus developments the Parish COVID Safety Team have decided that tests and coffees after 10am Mass will be suspended for the immediate future. Also there will be no Christmas Cards concertina folder at the back of Church for this year. The team apologise as they know this will cause disappointment but the decisions have been taken for parishioners health and safety. **IT IS COMPULSORY TO WEAR A MASK IN CHURCH UNLESS EXEMPT** Thank you.



Today is the Feast of the Holy Family. May God Bless all families.

Collections for 18th/19th December - Thank You	
1st Running of the Parish	£389.60
2nd Renovation	£365.72

Fr. Michael and Fr. Roman thank you for your kind generous offerings at Christmas and for your kind cards and gifts.

Please collect letters from basket in sacristy Brenda Williams, Maria Crowley, Ibanez Family, Marin, Dorothy Kennedy, Andy Milne and Rebecca King.

Take your Christmas tree to your local council recycling centre to compost with garden waste

'The Lord says this: You, Bethlehem, Ephrathah, the least of the clans of Judah, out of you will be born for me the one who is ruler over Israel, his origin goes back to the distant past, to the days of old. He himself will be peace." (Micah 1-2,4)

DEC Appeal for Afghanistan CAFOD is combining efforts with the DEC to launch the Afghanistan Crisis Appeal. In Afghanistan, 8 million people are on the brink of famine because of drought, collapsing economy, food shortages, conflict, and COVID. CAFOD is supporting sister Caritas agencies to reach communities most in need with food, clean water, and fuel. During Advent, when we open ourselves to the needs of others, let's do all that we can to save lives. You can donate on the CAFOD website: cafod.org.uk/AfghanistanAppeal Please pray for the people of Afghanistan.

Journeying Forward Together



Synod 2023 SFX Listening Project Jan/ Feb 2022
Everyone will now be aware of the 2023 Synod and Pope Francis' call to Catholics all over the world to become involved. Our parish reps, Stephen Booth and Dorothy Kennedy, have undertaken Diocesan training. They are tasked with enabling as many parishioners as possible to contribute their thoughts about how we journey forward together as a church and as a parish. Shortly after Christmas, a parish survey will be launched, with questions aimed at focusing thoughts and ideas on specific areas. All responses will be anonymous (unless you choose otherwise), you will be able to answer as many or as few questions as you want and all viewpoints will be valued and respected. Responses to the survey can be submitted electronically, via handwritten paper copies or verbally through group discussions or informal chats. We want to reach as many people as possible, including those who may feel on the periphery. This parish "listening" phase of the Synodal Pathway will last for 2 months (January and February 2022). We have to submit a document summarising parish responses to the Archdiocese of Cardiff by 25th March. We pray for guidance from the Holy Spirit that this will be a time of personal and parish renewal bringing many blessings to us all as we journey together as pilgrims through life.

Salve Regina. mater misericordiae; vita, dulcedo et spes nostra, salve. Ad te clamamus, exsules filii Hevae Ad te suspiramus, gentes et flentes ad nos converte. Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui, nobis post hoc exsultum ostende. O clemens, o pia, o dulcis Virgo Maria.

Prayer to St. Michael Holy Michael, Archangel, defend us in the day of battle; be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God thrust down to hell Satan and all wicked spirits who wander through the world for the ruin of souls. Amen

