

The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas, Year ABC)

1. The Vigil Mass

Acts 13:16-17, 22-25—The Promised Savior

[Paul] came to Antioch of Pisidia. And on the sabbath day they went into the synagogue... [and] Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said: “Men of Israel, and you that fear God, listen. ¹⁷ The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with uplifted arm he led them out of it... ²² And when he had removed [Saul], he raised up David to be their king; of whom he testified and said, ‘I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will.’ ²³ *Of this man’s posterity God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised.* ²⁴ Before his coming John had preached a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. ²⁵ And as John was finishing his course, he said, ‘What do you suppose that I am? I am not he. No, but after me one is coming, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.’” (Acts 13:16-17, 22-24)

2. Midnight Mass

Titus 2:11-14—The Grace of God Has Appeared

¹¹ For *the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men*, ¹² training us to renounce irreligion and worldly passions, and to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world, ¹³ awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of *our great God and Savior Jesus Christ*, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds (Titus 2:11-14)

3. Christmas Day Mass

Hebrews 1:1-6—God has Spoken Through His Son

¹ In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; ² but *in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son*, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³ He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature, *upholding the universe by his word of power*. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become as much *superior to angels* as the name he has obtained is more excellent than theirs. ⁵ For to what angel did God ever say, “Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee” []? Or again, “I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son”? ⁶ And again, when he brings the first-born into the world, he says, “Let all God’s angels worship him.” (Hebrews 1:1-6)

Questions for Discussion and Reflection (Nativity of the Lord, Christmas)

1. What exactly do we celebrate on the Feast of the Nativity? Which one of the second readings spoke to you most? Why?

For Further Reading in the Catechism

1. The Good News: God has sent Jesus Christ, the Son of God (CCC 422-455)
2. The Incarnation: Why Did the Word Become Flesh? (CCC 456-483)
2. The Virgin Birth and the Mystery of Christmas (CCC 484-526)