

Holy Innocents

Life Sunday

28 December A+D 2025



“For You formed my inward parts; You knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are Your works; my soul knows it very well.” —
Psalm 139:13-14 (ESV)

St. Peter’s Evangelical Lutheran Church U. A. C.
& Rainbow Preschool
145 S. 6th Street
Waterford, Wisconsin

We are a member congregation of
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH — MISSOURI SYNOD

Prelude

Hymn of Invocation: 385 From East to West

Order of Worship: p. 184

Introit

Psalm 8:1 antiphon: v. 2



Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, hast Thou ordained strength because of Thine | enemies,*
that Thou mightiest still the enemy and the a- | venger.

O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in | all the earth,*
who hast set Thy glory above the | heavens!



Glo - ry be to the Fa-ther and to the Son and to the Ho - ly Ghost;
as it was in the be-gin-ning, is now, and ev-er shall be, world with-out end. A-men.

Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, hast Thou ordained strength because of Thine | enemies,*
that Thou mightiest still the enemy and the a- | venger.

Kyrie - Salutation p. 186 ff

Collect of the Day

P O God, whose martyred innocents on this day showed forth Thy praise not by speaking but by dying, mortify all evils of vices within us that our lives may in deed confess Thy faith which our tongue uttereth; through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the of the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. **Amen.**

Sit

Prophecy

Exodus 1:8-22

In those days: There arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. And he said to his people, "Look, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we; come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies and fight against us, and so go up out of the land." Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh supply cities, Pithom and Raamses. But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were in dread of the children of Israel. So the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigor. And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage—in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field. All their service in which they made them serve was with rigor. Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of one was Shiphrah and the name of the other Puah; and he said, "When you do the duties of a midwife for the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstools, if it is a son, then you shall kill him; but if it is a daughter, then she shall live." But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male

children alive. So the king of Egypt called for the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this thing, and saved the male children alive?” And the midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are lively and give birth before the midwives come to them.” Therefore God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and grew very mighty. And so it was, because the midwives feared God, that He provided households for them. So Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, “Every son who is born you shall cast into the river, and every daughter you shall save alive.”

A The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Gradual

Psalm 124:7a; Psalm 124:7b-8



Our soul | is escaped*

as a bird out of the snare of the | fowlers.

The snare is broken, and we | are escaped.*

Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heav- | en and earth.

Epistle

Revelation 14:1-5

In those days: I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father’s name written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

A The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

Alleluia & Verse of the Day

Liturgical Text



C Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

Alleluia. The noble army of | martyrs praise Thee, | O Lord. **Alleluia.**

Holy Gospel

Matthew 2:13b-18

P The continuation of the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.



C Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

At that time: An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, “Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him.” When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, “Out of Egypt I called My Son.” Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: “A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.”

P The Gospel of the Lord.

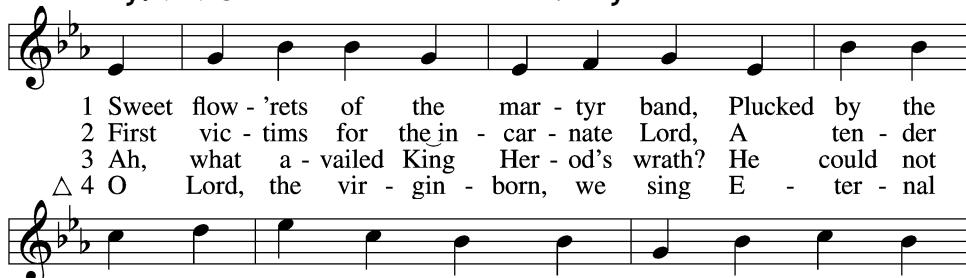


C Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

Nicene Creed

Sit

Hymn of the Day: 969 Sweet Flowerets of the Martyr Band



1 Sweet flow - 'rets of the mar - tyr band, Plucked by the
2 First vic - tims for the in - car - nate Lord, A ten - der
3 Ah, what a - vailed King Her - od's wrath? He could not
△ 4 O Lord, the vir - gin - born, we sing E - ter - nal



ty - rant's ruth - less hand Up - on the thresh - old
flock to feel the sword; Be - side the al - tar's
stop the Sav - ior's path. A - lone, while oth - ers
praise to You, our King, Whom with the Fa - ther



of the morn, Like rose - buds by a tem - pest torn;
rud - dy ray, With palm and crown, you seemed to play.
mur - dered lay, In safe - ty Christ is borne a - way.
we a - dore And Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more. **A-men.**

Text: Aurelius Prudentius Clemens, 348-c. 413; tr. Henry W. Baker, 1821-77, alt.

Tune: Daniel Vetter, d. 1721

Sermon

Offering Hymn: 370 What Child Is This

Stand

Offertory p. 192

LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE

P Millions of babies have been murdered through abortion. This is so incomprehensible. Perhaps that is why we do not mourn for them as a nation the way we mourn for children killed in tragic accidents or natural disasters. But let us try, as best we can, to remember them. Let us try to remember them as the individuals they were. Let us try to remember them as gifts from God whose lives were cut short before they could serve Him according to the purpose for which they were created. Let us remember the sons and daughters that were never born.

C Little arms that never stretched out asking to be held.

(A brief silence is observed after each petition)

P Let us remember the brothers and sisters who were never able to play with their siblings.

C Their laughter was never heard.

P We remember the teachers who were never able to teach and the pastors who were never able to preach.

C Wisdom that was never shared.

P We remember the physicians, nurses, technicians, researchers, and other medical professionals through whom God's hand of healing was never able to be extended.

C Mercy that was never given.

P Let us remember business people and courageous leaders who were never able to extend a godly influence upon our nation.

C Good examples that could never be followed.

P Let us remember the farmers who would never reap the fruits of the earth.

C Wholesome, hardworking lives that were never lived.

P We remember laborers whose hands could never form or craft or build.

C Productive lives that never were.

P We remember artists and musicians who will never be able to express the joys and the sorrows within them for others to identify with and appreciate.

C Works of art never seen, melodies never heard.

P Let us remember little girls who will never hold and nurture a child of their own and little boys

who will never grow up to be called “daddy.”

C Generations yet unborn never to be.

P Let us remember those children with special needs that will never touch our hearts in ways no one else could.

C God’s unique purpose for them never realized.

P We remember those who would have been born into what we might call, “less than desirable circumstances.”

C Opportunities for God to shape and form and do mighty things through suffering taken away.

P Millions—all individuals, all gifts from God, all capable of being used by God for His purpose, all deprived of the first and most fundamental right—the right to life.

C Most tragic of all, all individuals for whom Christ died who would never be able to hear of His precious love.

P There are other victims of abortion, victims who have not died, but who have been wounded. Let us remember the mothers of aborted children who, in weakness, desperation, and fear, listened to the voices of death.

C Lift their hearts to You, O God, that they might know the sin of abortion, lay their burden at the foot of the cross, and receive forgiveness and hope in Jesus Christ.

P Let us remember the fathers of aborted children who, unable or unwilling to protect a defenseless life, are in conflict with their responsibility to their preborn child, to the mother of that child, and to God.

C Lift their hearts to You, O God, that they might know the sin of abortion, lay their burden at the foot of the cross, and receive forgiveness and hope in Jesus Christ.

P We remember grandparents of aborted children who, unable or unwilling to protect a defenseless life, are in conflict with both their conscience and God.

C Lift their hearts to You, O God, that they might know the sin of abortion, lay their burden at the foot of the cross, and receive forgiveness and hope in Jesus Christ.

P Let us remember the doctors, counselors, and all who have been deceived by Satan to see abortion as a solution to difficult problems of life.

C Lift their hearts to You, O God, that they might know the sin of abortion, lay their burden at the foot of the cross, and receive forgiveness and hope in Jesus Christ.

P We remember ourselves, members of the Body of Christ, who in ignorance or fear have been silent when we should have spoken; passive when we should have acted to defend the “least of these.”

C Lift our hearts to You, O God, that we might know the sin of abortion, lay our burden at the foot of the cross, and receive forgiveness and hope in Jesus Christ.

RESPONSIVE PRAYERS

P Let us pray for our nation, a nation richly blessed by God, but a nation that tragically sanctions the murder of so many human children.

C **Lord, have mercy upon our nation and change our hearts.**

(A brief silence is observed after each petition.)

P Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayers. We pray for the Church, a Church richly blessed by God's grace, but too often sadly silent as the innocent are being slaughtered.

C **Lord, have mercy upon Your Church and change our hearts.**

P Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayers. We pray for women and men struggling with a crisis pregnancy.

C **Lord, have mercy upon them and help them choose life and help us support them.**

P Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayers. Let us pray for mothers and fathers who are suffering the aftermath of an abortion. They, too, are its victims.

C **Lord, have mercy upon them and help them find healing in the cross of Jesus and help us share this forgiving love with them.**

P Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayers. Let us pray for children, born and unborn.

C **Lord, have mercy upon the children and in Your grace bring them to the fullness of life that You have promised in Your Son.**

P Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayers. As we remember the children whose lips never had a chance to speak it, we pray together the Lord's Prayer:

C **Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth
 as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
 as we forgive those
 who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom
 and the power and the glory
 forever and ever. Amen.**

The Words of Our Lord- Agnus Dei p. 197ff

Sit

Distribution Hymns:

364 Away in a Manger /

725 Children of the Heavenly Father /

716 I Walk in Danger All the Way /

390 Let Us All with Gladsome Voice /
372 O Jesus Christ, Thy Manger Is /
666 O Little Flock, Fear Not the Foe
625 Lord Jesus Christ, Life-Giving Bread

Stand

Nunc Dimitis *p. 199 ff*

Hymn to Depart: 588 Jesus Loves Me

Postlude

No service Wednesday December 31 or January 7

Looking Forward to Next Sunday (Christmas I)

Lessons: Jeremiah 31:31-34, Galatians 4:1-7, Luke 2:33-40

Hymns: 375-TLH 103(printed)-359/373/519/389/392/384/640-368

Looking Forward to the Feast of the Epiphany of Our Lord (Tuesday Jan 6 6:30pm)

Lessons: Isaiah 60:1-6, Ephesians 3:2-12, Matthew 2:1-12

Hymns: 396-395-399-397-888

Acknowledgments

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We Welcome Our Guests Today!

We're glad you've joined us in worship today. Please fill out a Visitor Card (located in the pew rack) and hand it to an usher or place it in the offering plate. We also ask that you read "*Our Practice Concerning Holy Communion*" printed below. Please visit our **Welcome Center** in the narthex and worship with us again soon.

Our Practice Concerning Holy Communion

In keeping with the tradition of the early Church and the Lutheran Confessions, we celebrate the Lord's Supper every Lord's Day. Because Holy Communion is an expression of complete unity of faith and doctrine, only active and repentant members of St. Peter's or a sister Missouri Synod congregation may commune. This is not a judgment of the faith of others, but rather an indication of our obedience to the Lord's command that those who kneel together at His altar be in complete unity regarding what they believe and teach (please read I Cor. 1:10; 10:16-17; 11:17-32). Your respect for our practice concerning the Lord's Supper is appreciated. Please talk to Pastor if you have any questions.

If communing with individual cup, please hold your empty cup until Pastor has passed you with the chalice. And please remember to fill out a Communion card.

The Gathering of the Offerings

God finances His church. The gathering of the offerings is, therefore, not merely collecting money. It is a holy privilege for those who believe in Jesus Christ. This is our opportunity to gratefully respond to God's love and grace by returning a portion of the gifts He has given us. As God's children, we consider it a special honor to build and extend His kingdom through our offerings. St. Paul writes, "God loves a cheerful giver" (II Cor. 9:7b NKJV). Our visitors and guests are in no way compelled to contribute to this offering. We ask nothing of our guests except that they return here often to hear more about God's great love in Jesus Christ, our Lord. If anyone wishes to give electronically, you may scan this QR code to set up an account.



Small Children

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19:14). Jesus wants your little ones present with Him during our worship service. And so do we.

When you're little, it's hard to sit without fidgeting or making some noise. And of course babies join us with their songs, too! We consider their small voices to be a part of our sacred music as they learn with us what it is to be a Christian. We encourage their presence throughout the entire service.

If you feel that your children are being too disruptive, please feel free to take them to the nursery that is located on the other side of the Conference Room. A closed-circuit television will bring the service to you. An usher will be happy to direct you.

"Repetitio est mater studiorum: Repetition is the mother of all learning." The more they're here, the easier it will get.

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