

Scripture Prayer For The Week



Artwork Dorothy Woodward

"Once...
when Jesus...
was praying alone..." Luke 9:18

Nativity of the Lord Year A

We Gather: In the prayer space, have the bible opened at the Gospel reading. A white cloth covers the table. A large star might stand on/be attached to the display. A white candle could be lit as the gathering prayer is said.

Leader: Today a light will shine upon us
All: The Lord has come amongst us.

We Listen: The Gospel (from Mass at Dawn). Luke 2:15-20

Read the gospel passage reflectively. After a time of silent reflection, the line from scripture below could be repeated and the short commentary read.

'Everyone was astonished at what the shepherds had to say.' Luke 2: 1

Commentary: So the shepherds told everyone what the angels had earlier told them- 'A saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.' We have visions of Mary, Joseph and babe in a quiet stable, but according to Luke it seems to have been as busy as Central Station. A group of shepherds and 'everyone' were there to hear the news. Whether it was or not, doesn't matter. The 'everyone' mentioned is Everyone. The shepherds have done what we all have to do: listen to the angels and tell on the story, proclaiming that the anointed one, the messiah and saviour, has come. Emmanuel has broken into the dawn of human history. We continue to be astonished when we pause in the quiet of Christmas morning to ponder what Mary treasured in her heart. Somehow, God's presence was not just in the soft air, or in the cloud or fire, but there with ten tiny fingers and ten tiny toes.

We Respond: 'Everyone was astonished.'

In silence, reflect on the questions below? You may wish to have a time of brief sharing.

- When have I been astonished? Is it a long time ago? Am I too cool to be amazed?
- What triggers astonishment and amazement? A new born babe, a fresh spring morning, a scented red rose, a surfer on the perfect wave, an unexpected kindness?
- How grateful am I of these moments when God's surprise is shown in me?

Song: Joy to the World (Watts/Handel-AOV1) or Carol at the Manger (M Haugen-Gather)

We Go Forth:

God of infinite surprise. The marvels of our universe are only a hint of the wonder of your coming into human history in Jesus, son of Mary and Joseph. Carry us on with your delight in the people of earth so that, as we follow the way of Christ, we may be light and joy to others. We pray this in the name of the holy babe of Bethlehem. Amen

Leader: Let us go, in joy and holy gladness **All:** Thanks be to God.