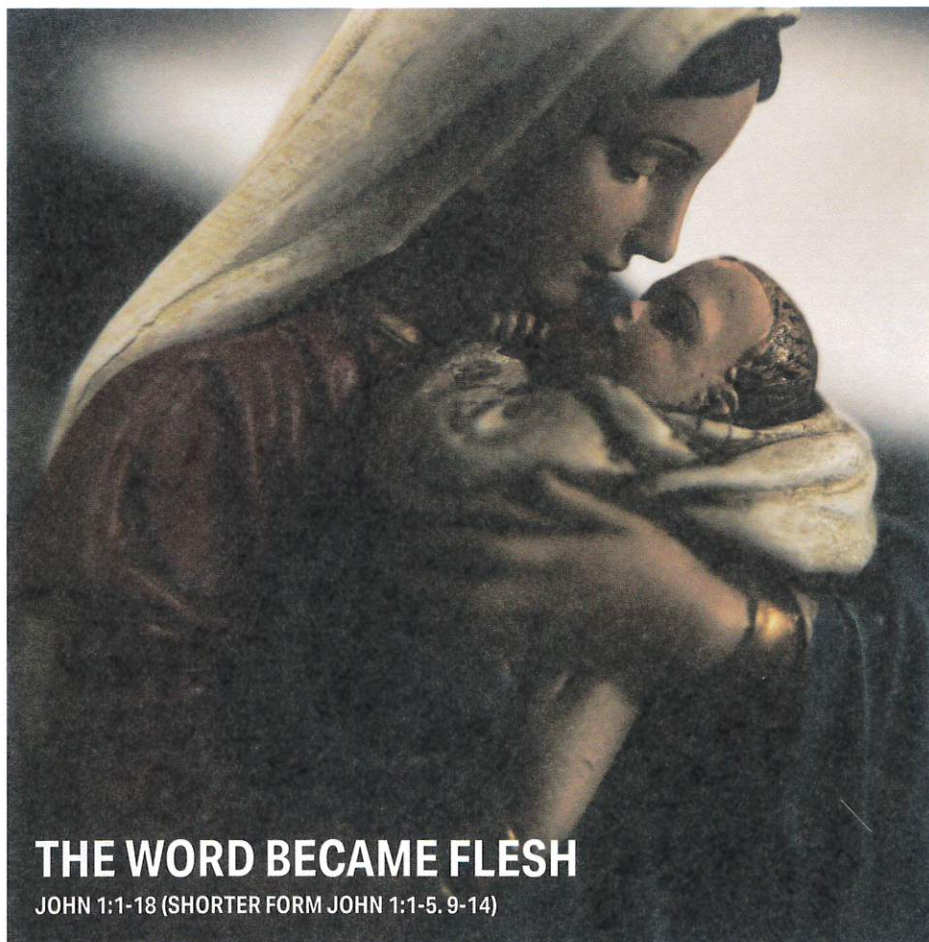


Sunday Message

2ND SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY

THE WORD

Year A • 4 January 2026 • Psalter Week 2



THE WORD BECAME FLESH

JOHN 1:1-18 (SHORTER FORM JOHN 1:1-5, 9-14)

John's Gospel begins not with a story of shepherds or wise men, but with a great mystery: "In the beginning was the Word." These words remind us of the first line of the Bible – "In the beginning, God created..." John wants us to know that Jesus was there from the very start.

He is the eternal Word of God – not just sent by God, but truly God Himself.

John says that everything was made through Jesus. He is the source of life and light for all people. But when He came into the world, many did not recognise Him. Some even rejected Him. Still, for those who welcomed Him, He gave a new gift – the chance to become children of God.

The most powerful line is this: "The Word became flesh and lived among us." God chose to become one of us – not distant or above us, but right here, walking our roads, sharing our troubles. In Jesus, we see what God is really like – full of grace and truth.

This passage is not just about who Jesus is, but about how close God wants to be to us. He doesn't shout from far away. He comes near – in love, in mercy, and in person. ■

DO

Take five minutes today in quiet prayer, thanking Jesus for coming close to us – and ask Him to help you see His light in someone you meet today.

LEARN

God became one of us in Jesus, so that we could come to know Him, receive His love, and live as His children.

REFLECT

"In the beginning was the Word." With these opening words, St John takes us beyond Bethlehem, beyond time itself. He draws us into the mystery of Christ – the eternal Word, who was with God, and who is God. This is no ordinary birth story. This is a proclamation: the Creator has stepped into His creation.

"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." God has come close. Not as a thunderclap from the heavens, but wrapped in human skin, lying in a manger. The eternal enters time, not to overwhelm us, but to walk with us – to teach, to heal, to weep, and to redeem.

Many missed Him. "He came to his own and his own received him not." That line echoes still. It's possible to miss the presence of God even in the middle of religion, even at Christmas. But, "to those who did receive him... he gave power to become children of God."

This Gospel invites us not just to admire Jesus, but to receive Him – into the clutter and complexity of our lives. In the Word made flesh, we see God's glory: not distant, but tender, truthful, and full of grace. Let us make room for Him – not just in church, but in our hearts. ■

SAY

St John, beloved disciple,
you saw the glory of the Word
made flesh.
Help me to love Jesus as you did,
to stay close to Him in light and in
darkness,
and to share His love with others
through gentle words and faithful
living.
Amen.



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*When a profound silence covered all things
and night was in the middle of its course,
your all-powerful Word, O Lord,
bounded from heaven's royal throne.*

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God,
splendour of faithful souls,
graciously be pleased to fill the world with your glory,
and show yourself to all peoples by the radiance of your light.
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 Sirach 24:1-2. 8-12

A reading from the Book of Sirach.

Wisdom will praise herself
and will boast in the midst of her people.
In the assembly of the Most High she will open her mouth,
and in the presence of his forces she will boast:
'Then the Creator of all things commanded me,
and the one who created me gave my tent a resting place.
And he said, "Make your dwelling in Jacob
and in Israel receive your inheritance."
From eternity, in the beginning, he created me,
and for eternity I shall not cease to exist.
In the holy tabernacle I ministered before him,
and so I was established in Sion.
In the beloved city likewise he gave me a resting place,
and in Jerusalem was my dominion.
So I took root in an honoured people,
in the portion of the Lord, his inheritance.'

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 147:12-13. 14-15. 19-20.

R. John 1:14

R: The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

Or *Alleluia.*

1. O Jerusalem, glorify the LORD!
O Sion, praise your God!
He has strengthened the bars of your gates;
he has blessed your children within you. *R.*
2. He established peace on your borders;
he gives you your fill of finest wheat.
He sends out his word to the earth,
and swiftly runs his command. *R.*
3. He reveals his word to Jacob;
to Israel, his decrees and judgements.
He has not dealt thus with other nations;
he has not taught them his judgements. *R.*

SECOND READING Ephesians 1:3-6. 15-18

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians.
Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has
blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly
places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the
world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love
he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus
Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his
glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord
Jesus and your love towards all the saints, I do not cease to give

thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of
our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit
of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the
eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the
hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious
inheritance in the saints.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL cf. 1 Timothy 3:16

R: Alleluia, Alleluia.

Glory to you, O Christ, proclaimed among the nations.

Glory to you, O Christ, believed in throughout the world.

R: Alleluia.

GOSPEL John 1:1-18

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

(for shorter form read between > <)

> In the beginning was the Word: and the Word was with God and
the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things
were made through him, and without him was not any thing made
that was made. In him was life and the life was the light of men. The
light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. <

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came
as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe
through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about
the light.

> The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the
world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him,
yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own
people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who
believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,
who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the
will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have
seen his glory, glory as of the Only Begotten from the Father, full
of grace and truth. <

John bore witness about him, and cried out, 'This was he of whom
I said, "He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was
before me."'

For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For
the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through
Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; the only begotten God,
who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Sanctify, O Lord, the offerings we make
on the Nativity of your Only Begotten Son,
for by it you show us the way of truth
and promise the life of the heavenly Kingdom.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*To all who would accept him,
he gave the power to become children of God.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord our God, we humbly ask you,
that, through the working of this mystery,
our offences may be cleansed
and our just desires fulfilled.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.