



ST. THOMAS' CATHEDRAL  
MUMBAI  
Since 1718



*The Church of North India*  
*A member of the worldwide Anglican Communion*

Sundays 7 am Eucharist (*said*) † 8.45 am Eucharist (*sung*)  
Weekdays 7 am to 6 pm for a time of quiet prayer and reflection

On 28<sup>th</sup> December, the Church marks 'Holy Innocents' Day'.  
On this day, according to one of the Gospels, King Herod sought to secure his power by ordering the deaths of all the infants in and around Bethlehem. Today's celebration shocks us into the realization that the birth of Christ was not all peace and joy.

The coming of Jesus was the beginning of a struggle-to-death between the powers of evil and the kingdom of light, a struggle that would have its climax in the passion and death of Jesus.

Often, the innocents have to suffer on account of so much evil in the world caused by other people.

For some years, this by Christians involved social justice to draw suffering and deaths of day as a result of war



day has been chosen in work for peace and attention to the suffering innocent people to and injustice.

# The Holy Innocents

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> December 2025 • 8.45 a.m.

## Welcome to St Thomas' Cathedral for this service

We are the mother church of the Diocese of Bombay in the Church of North India, a member of the worldwide Anglican Communion. For over 300 years, the people of St. Thomas' Cathedral have sought to be a body through which the light of Christ is seen, his life is shared, and his work is done.

The basis for our worship is the *Book of Common Prayer*, our common liturgical heritage with Anglicans across the world (all churches descended from the Church of England). We are rooted in tradition but celebrate the richness and diversity of the Communion. Music and hymnody represent the best of the Anglican choral tradition.

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Follow the readings and the Order of Service for the Lord's Supper from *The Book of Common Prayer* (refer page numbers).

The hymns can be found in *Hymns Ancient & Modern New Standard*

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***Please take this order of service away with you.***

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Society of St. Thomas Cathedral

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# Order of Service

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The congregation is asked to join in all text printed in **bold**.

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## The Gathering

Voluntary

Cradle Song': *Lullaby* ... .. Malcolm Archer (b. 1952)

Prelude on 'Greensleeves' ... .. Alec Rowley (1892 - 1958)

Welcome

Introit

*Sung by the cantors*

*All keep silence and prepare for worship*

Lully, lullay, thou little tiny child,  
by by, lully, lullay.

O sisters too,  
how may we do  
for to preserve this day  
this poor Youngling  
for Whom we sing?  
By by, lully, lullay.

Herod the king,  
in his raging,  
chargèd he hath this day  
his men of might,  
in his own sight,  
all young children to slay.

That woe is me,  
poor child, for Thee!  
and ever mourn and say;  
for Thy parting,  
neither say nor sing,  
by, by, lully, lullay!

Coventry carol, 15<sup>th</sup> century

*All stand and face the West Door*

## Invitation to Confession

*Presbyter*

On this day when we recall the murder of innocent lives,  
let us stand before our just and holy God,  
and remembering the violence and injustice of our world,  
confess our sins in penitence and faith.

*Continued*

You are the God of the weak and the vulnerable.  
Lord, have mercy.

*All* **Lord, have mercy.**

You judge the tyrant and the cruel.

Christ, have mercy.

**Christ, have mercy.**

You wipe away the tears of the broken-hearted.

Lord, have mercy.

**Lord, have mercy.**

*All join in singing the hymn*

**O little town of Bethlehem**

The Entrance Carol | # 40

*Tune: FOREST GREEN*

*Please be seated*

*All say together*

The Collect for Purity | **page 260**

## *The Liturgy of the Word*

The Collect for the Day | **page 316**

*Read by the Presbyter*

The First Reading | **page page 317**

*Jeremiah 31:10 - 17*

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah

*At the conclusion of the reading:* This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*All stand and read the text in bold*

Psalm

*Nisi Quia Dominus*

124

<sup>1</sup> If the Lord himself had not been on our side, ♦  
now may Israel say;

<sup>2</sup> **If the Lord had not been on our side, ♦**  
**when enemies rose up against us;**

*Continued*

- <sup>3</sup> Then would they have swallowed us alive ♦  
 when their anger burned against us;
- <sup>4</sup> **Then would the waters have overwhelmed us  
 and the torrent gone over our soul; ♦  
 over our soul would have swept the raging waters.**
- <sup>5</sup> But blessed be the Lord ♦  
 who has not given us over to be a prey for their teeth.
- <sup>6</sup> **Our soul has escaped  
 as a bird from the snare of the fowler; ♦  
 the snare is broken and we are delivered.**
- <sup>7</sup> Our help is in the name of the Lord, ♦  
 who has made heaven and earth.
- Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,  
 And to the Holy Ghost;  
**As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:  
 World without end. Amen.**

*Please be seated*

## The Second Reading | **page 318**

*Revelation 14:1 - 5*

A reading from the Revelation of Saint John the Divine.

*At the conclusion of the reading:* This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*All stand and join in singing*

The Gradual

**All hail! ye infant Martyr flowers,  
 Cut off in life's first dawning hours:  
 As rosebuds snapt in tempest strife,  
 When Herod sought your Saviour's life.**

- <sup>2</sup> **You, tender flock of lambs, we sing,  
 First victims slain for Christ your King:  
 Beneath the Altar's Heavenly ray  
 With Martyr-palms and crowns ye play!**

*Continued*

<sup>3</sup> **For their redemption glory be,  
O Jesu, Virgin-born, to thee!  
With Father, and with Holy Ghost,  
For ever, from the Martyr-host! Amen.**

Words: Prudentius (348 - 410)  
Translated Revd J Neale, Revd T. Helmore M.

Tune: PUER NOBIS NASCITUR (#309)  
Praetorius (1571 - 1621)

*Remain standing for the Gospel  
as the cantor sings the Alleluia and we respond*

## The Gospel Acclamation

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

Never despise these little ones;  
their guardian angels in heaven look continuously  
on the face of my heavenly Father. *Matthew 18.10*

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

## The Gospel of Christ | **page 318**

*St Matthew 2:13 - 18*

*Gospeller*      The Lord be with you.  
*All*                **And with thy spirit.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St Matthew.

**Glory be to Thee, O Lord.**

*At the end of the Gospel:*

*The Gospeller*      This is the Gospel of Jesus Christ.  
*All*                    **Praise be to Thee, O Christ.**

*Remain standing, all reciting the Creed*

## The Nicene Creed | **page 265**

*Please be seated*

**Sermon**

The Reverend Avinash T. Rangayya, *Cathedral Presbyter*

# The Liturgy of the Sacrament

## The Peace

*All stand*

*The Celebrant offers a greeting of peace*

*Celebrant*

'I will comfort you,' says the Lord,  
'as a mother comforts her child, and you shall be comforted.'  
The peace of the Lord be always with you *Isaiah 66.13*  
**and also with you.**

*All*

*Members of the congregation greet one another.*

*Remain standing to sing the offertory hymn.*

*At this time the altar is set with the gifts of bread and wine and the gifts of the people are gathered and presented. Thank you for your generosity.*

*All join in singing*

## Carol at the Offertory

See inside front cover for bank details to make your offering.

**Away in a manger no crib for His bed  
the little Lord Jesus lay down His sweet head.  
The stars in the sky look down where He lay,  
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**

**<sup>2</sup> The cattle are lowing the poor Baby wakes  
but little Lord Jesus no crying He makes.  
I love Thee, Lord Jesus look down from the sky  
and stay by my side till morning is nigh.**

**<sup>3</sup> Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay  
close by me forever and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care  
and take us to Heaven to live with Thee there.**

Words: William Kirkpatrick (1838 - 1921)

Tune: CRADLE SONG

*All say*

Offertory Prayer | **page 270**

*Intercessor*

In peace let us pray to the God of love.  
Righteous God,  
your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ dwelt among us  
and shared our grief and our pain.  
We pray for the children of our world,  
that they may grow up knowing love and security.  
Lord, in thy mercy,

*All*

**hear our prayer.**

We pray for all children who suffer physical or mental abuse.  
Lord, in thy mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all communities in our world  
who live with the memories of massacre and gross cruelty.  
Lord, in thy mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who are corrupted by power  
and who regard human life as cheap. Lord, in thy mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

We pray for parents who have suffered the death of a child.  
Lord, in thy mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for parents and guardians,  
that they may be given grace to care for the children  
entrusted to them. Lord, in thy mercy, **hear our prayer.**

As we celebrate the coming of the Christ-child,  
we rejoice in the fellowship of the Holy Innocents  
and commit the children of this community,  
our nation and our world to you, our righteous God.  
Merciful Father,

**accept these prayers  
for the sake of your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ.  
Amen.**

The General Confession & Absolution | *page 275, 276*

The Consecration | *page 277*

The Communion | *page 284*

*Proceed to the High Altar for receiving Communion*

*While seated, we sing*

## Carol at the Communion

**What Child is this, who, laid to rest,  
On Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,  
While shepherds watch are keeping?**

*Chorus: This, this is Christ the King,  
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:  
This, this is Christ the King,  
The Babe, the Son of Mary.*

<sup>2</sup> **Why lies He in such mean estate,  
Where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here  
The silent Word is pleading.**

<sup>3</sup> **So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh,  
Come, peasant, king to own Him;  
The King of kings salvation brings,  
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.**

Words: William C. Dix (1837 - 1898)

Tune: GREENSLEEVES  
Old English melody

*All stand*

## Post Communion Prayer

*Presbyter*

Lord Jesus Christ,  
in your humility you have stooped to share our human life  
with the most defenceless of your children:  
may we who have received these gifts of your passion  
rejoice in celebrating the witness of the Holy Innocents  
to the purity of your sacrifice  
made once for all upon the cross;  
for you are alive and reign, now and for ever.

*All*

**Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us  
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.  
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies  
to be a living sacrifice.  
Send us out in the power of your Spirit  
to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.**

*All stand and sing*

Gloria in Excelsis | page 288

## The Blessing

**Presbyter** God, who gives life to the dead and comfort to the desolate,  
sustain you, keep you and console you,  
And the blessing of God almighty,  
† the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.

**All** **Amen.**

## Recessional Hymn | # 44

**Behold, the great Creator makes**

*Tune:* WINCHESTER OLD (# 37)

*From the West Door the Presbyter says*

## Dismissal

Let us go forth in the name of the Child of Bethlehem,  
Jesus the Christ.

**All reply** **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

## Postlude

Noël Etranger ... .. Louis - Claude Daquin (1694 - 1772)

Please stay back after the service for a time of fellowship over a cup of coffee. Introduce yourself to the Presbyter if you are worshipping with us for the first time.

*The flowers in the Sanctuary this morning are  
in loving memory of  
the Revd. V. Samuel & Mrs. Swarnam Samuel  
(grandparents of Samuel Joseph, who served in the  
Diocese of Thirunelveli. Their death anniversary falls at this time.)*

### ~ Birthdays this Week ~

'For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works,  
which God prepared in advance for us to do.'

Ephesians 2:10

Mr. Jayden Knox (28), Mr. John Madathilaparambel (29),  
Mrs. Sharmila Chandran (29), Mr. Reuben Baker (30), Mr. Suresh Patil (30)

## ~ Wedding Anniversaries this Week ~

*'Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves.'*

Romans 12:10

Mr. Ernest & Mrs. Pritam Knox (28), Mr. Jai & Mrs. Aradhna Knox (28),  
Mr. Malcolm & Mrs. Jaisy Desai (28), Mr. John & Mrs. Rebecca Roberts (28),  
The Reverend Avinash & Reverend Mrs. Arpana Rangayya (29),  
Mr. Rahul & Mrs. Roshni Jadhav (29), Mr. David & Nalini Cyprian (30),  
Mr. Vivek and Miriam John (30), Mr. Gladston Somervel & Mrs. Sunita Gladston (31)

## Blessing for the Children of the world

Christmas is the time in which we are called to embrace the vulnerability of God. It is a time to care for the Christchild who is continually born among us in all that is fragile and weak and longing to grow up into God.

It is a time to care for the children of our world who, in their small but real beginnings, are the dawning of the future. So we remember the children of the world with this blessing:

God's peace is for you.

May the God of all people and the Lord Jesus Christ  
give us all grace and peace today and every day.

Amen.

*We say this prayer in our hearts for the children in Gaza, Israel, Ukraine, Russia, Syria, Myanmar, Sudan, the Congo and all other areas of the world experiencing conflict.*



## Watchnight Service

Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025 • 10:30 p.m.

*Choral Eucharist*

Worship with us  
on New Year's eve. Spend time in  
prayer and reflection,  
hear words of  
assurance from the  
Holy Bible and sing hymn of praise.



## Pray with us

† **THE WORLD** In the words of the psalmist, "*My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.*" (Psalm 121). Our fervent prayers continue for a de-escalation of the long-drawn out war between Russia and Ukraine • For peace in the Holy Land • For restoration of normalcy and peace between communities in neighbouring Bangladesh.

† **OUR COUNTRY** Continue to pray for communal harmony and peace both within our country and at our borders.

† **THE WORLDWIDE CHURCH** We give thanksgiving for St. Stephen the first martyr (26<sup>th</sup> December) and his faithful witness to Jesus • St. John the Evangelist is commemorated on 27<sup>th</sup> December. St. John the Evangelist put Christmas in one verse: "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (*John 1:14*). Not martyred but still a witness, John was exiled to Patmos and died an old man, according to tradition. He bore witness "to the Word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw." (*Revelation 1:2*) • Today 28<sup>th</sup> December) is the Feast of the Holy Innocents, when the Church remembers the massacre of innocent children recounted in Matthew's gospel (2:16–18) when King Herod ordered the execution of all male children who are two years old and under in the vicinity of Bethlehem, in an attempt to remove any threat to his rule from what he believed to be a new King (Jesus) born in Bethlehem. This day has become associated with remembering innocent people who have lost their lives in times of violence, in our own time, and a chance to pray for children and for an end to injustice • In the Anglican Communion, for The Episcopal Church of the United States of America and the Presiding Bishop the Most Reverend Sean W. Rowe.

† **THE CHURCH IN INDIA** The Diocese of Agra Bishop Bijaya Nayak • The Diocese of Dornakal (Telangana) and Bishop K. Padma Rao.

† **THE DIOCESE OF BOMBAY** The Church of the Holy Redeemer, Dadar and the Reverend Shimon Samuel.

† **OUR CATHEDRAL** Pray for all senior citizens and their care providers • For all who are worshipping with us this morning. We thank God for the well-attended services over Advent and Christmastide. May this Cathedral continue to be a House of Prayer for all people.

### ST. THOMAS' CATHEDRAL

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*Contact the Presbyter for pastoral visits and administering Communion to the house-bound.*

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