

## CHRISTMAS -- MIDNIGHT

(Year A, B, C)

Reading 1

*Citation:* Isaiah, Chap. 9, verses 1-6  
Isaiah 9:1 -6

Isaiah is very concerned that the Israelites remain committed to their God in spite of their domination of the Assyrians. He describes their situation in terms of darkness and gloom as well as of the weapons that were used against them both in battle and as slaves. Yet, he points out that even this will end when God intervenes in their destiny as he describes the coming of their liberator. His promise is a cause for joy, even now in their darkest plight. Today, for many of mankind, is not much different from what happened more than 2,000 years ago. Be Isaiah to your listeners!

### A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom  
a light has shone.

(voice is somber)  
(joy, amazement) (short pause)  
(somber)  
(amazement, joy) (short pause)

You have brought them abundant joy and great rejoicing,  
as they rejoice before you as at the harvest,  
as people make merry when dividing spoils.

(very short pause)  
(very short pause)  
(short pause)

For the yoke that burdened them,  
the pole on their shoulder,  
and the rod of their taskmaster  
you have smashed,  
as on the day of Midian.

(serious) (very short pause)  
(serious) (very short pause)  
(serious) (very short pause)  
(make each of the 3 words count)  
(short pause)

For every boot that tramped in battle,  
every cloak rolled in blood,  
will be burned as fuel for flames.

(serious) (very short pause)  
(make each of the 5 words count)  
(disdain) (short pause)

For a child is born to us,  
a son is given us;  
upon his shoulder dominion rests.

(awe & amazement) (very short pause)  
(pride!) (very short pause)  
(affirmation!) (short pause)

They name him Wonder-Counselor,  
God-Hero,  
Father-Forever,  
Prince of Peace.

(speak each title distinctly! and with awe)

(Pause)

His dominion is vast and forever peaceful,  
from David's throne, and over his kingdom,  
which he confirms and sustains by judgment and justice,  
both now and forever.

(short pause)  
(very short pause)  
[parenthetical expression?]  
(Pause)

**Proclaim the Word!**

**Proclamation Format**

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this!

(volume up a bit) (resolute conviction!)

**The Word of the Lord.**

## CHRISTMAS -- MIDNIGHT

(Year A, B, C)

Reading 2

Citation: Titus, Chap. 2, verses 11-14  
Titus 2: 11-14

**St Paul is counseling Titus with respect to the value and understanding of the coming of Jesus and what He did through His life, death and resurrection. Jesus is the model for everyone. Coping the de-humanizing enticements of the world is paramount in our lives. Paul is confident, passionate, yet there is a gentleness to his words, too. Let your listeners "see" these.**

### A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to Titus

Beloved:

The grace of God has appeared, saving all  
and training us to reject godless ways and worldly desires

(excitement?)

(drop the "and?")(very short pause)

and to live temperately,  
justly, and devoutly  
in this age,

(drop the "and"?)

(disregard the comma)

(very short pause)

as we await the blessed hope,  
the appearance of the glory of our great God and savior  
Jesus Christ,

(voice volume up on "hope")

(pride!)

who gave himself for us  
to deliver us from all lawlessness  
and to cleanse for himself  
a people as his own,  
eager to do what is good.

(very short pause)

(short pause)

(very short pause)

(insistent) (very short pause)

(voice goes down but firm)

**The Word of the Lord.**

## CHRISTMAS -- MIDNIGHT

Year A-B-C

GOSPEL

*Citation: Luke, Chap. 2, Verses 1-14  
Luke 2: 1-14*

**The story of Jesus' birth characterized by his parents' observation of the local government's decrees as well as by their poverty. It is in recognition of who He is that Luke describes the scene out in the nearby pastureland. It is an awesome, amazing scene intended to drive Luke's point home.**

### A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

In those days  
a decree went out from Caesar Augustus  
that the whole world should be enrolled.  
(you're story-telling)  
(very short pause)

This was the first enrollment,  
when Quirinius was governor of Syria.  
(almost parenthetical)  
(very short pause)

So all went to be enrolled,  
each to his own town.  
(very short pause)

And Joseph too went up from Galilee  
from the town of Nazareth  
to Judea,  
to the city of David that is called Bethlehem,  
because he was of the house and family of David,  
to be enrolled with Mary,  
his betrothed,  
who was with child.  
(not quite parenthetical)  
(short pause)

While they were there,  
the time came for her to have her child,  
and she gave birth to her firstborn son.  
(very short pause)  
(voice goes down emphatically)

She wrapped him in swaddling clothes  
and laid him in a manger,  
because there was no room for them in the inn.  
(NOT parenthetical; explaining)

Now there were shepherds in that region  
living in the fields  
and keeping the night watch over their flock.  
[a change of scene and purpose]  
(very short pause)

The angel of the Lord appeared to them  
and the glory of the Lord shone around them,  
and they were struck with great fear.  
(WOW!)  
(more WOW!)  
(almost foreboding ?) (very short pause)

The angel said to them,  
"Do not be afraid;  
for behold,  
(soliciting)

## Proclamation Format

I proclaim to you good news of great joy  
that will be for all the people.

(very happy)

For today

(right now!)

in the city of David

(triumphant?)

a savior has been born for you

who is Christ

(insistent)

and Lord.

"

And this will be a sign for you:

(joy continues)

you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes

and lying in a manger."

(still upbeat) (short pause)

And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel,

(get excited!)

praising God

and saying:

*"Glory to God in the highest*

(adoration)

*and on earth*

(voice goes up a bit)

*peace*

(insistent)

*to those on whom his favor rests."*

(very firm)

**The Gospel of the Lord.**