Christmas Carol Service

Theme: The Birth of Jesus and the Light of Christmas



Welcome / Introduction -

Principal, Leader or Chaplain:

Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to our school's Christmas Carol Service. Today, we come together to celebrate the birth of Jesus, the light of the world. We will sing, reflect, and remember those in need.

The streets are crowded now with shoppers, and the carols are being sung, Christmas songs are heard in every shop; there's an air of festivity and business. But alongside the business and busy-ness there is a wish of peace on earth and goodwill among people.

Christmas can bring out the best in people – it is a time when bitterness and anger can be forgotten. It is a time when charity and kindness can be seen everywhere. In our school we have given to charity, we have thought of others and we have shown kindness and love to those around us.

As we pause now we stop and think about how the love of God has touched our own lives and about how we can go away from here today to show kindness and goodwill to those we meet.

Opening Carol: Once in Royal David's City/ Don Oiche Ud I mBeithil

Gospel Reading

Reader: Teacher or student

Reading: Luke 2:1-20 (The Birth of Jesus)

"In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken… Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem… And she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them… And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them… 'Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.'"

"The Word of the Lord."

All: "Thanks be to God."

Irish Tradition: Lighting the Christmas Candle and Placing Baby Jesus in the Crib

Leader / Chaplain:

As a symbol of the light of Christ coming into our world, we invite the youngest and oldest students in our school to light the Christmas candle and place the baby Jesus in the crib.

Action: Youngest student lights the candle; oldest places baby Jesus in the crib while O Holy Night is sung or played.

Carol: O Holy Night/ The Wexford Carol

Prayers of the Faithful

Leader/ Chaplain:

In this season of hope and joy, we bring our prayers to God, trusting in His love and care.
Read by: Staff and students
For those who are poor or in need, that they may be comforted by the charity of others. Lord hear us
All: Lord graciously hear us.

For those who are sick or suffering, that they may find healing and strength this Christmas time. Lord hear us.
All: Lord graciously hear us.

For those who have died, and for their families. May they rest in the peace of Christ.
Lord hear us.
All: Lord graciously hear us

For the families of our students, may love, joy and peace be in all our homes this Christmas. Lord hear us.
All: Lord graciously hear us.

For our students and teachers, that we may live in peace and kindness, sharing the joy of the season with all we meet. Lord hear us.
All: Lord graciously hear us.
Leader/Chaplain:

Heavenly Father, hear these prayers and grant us Your peace this Christmas. Amen.

Carol: Born on Christmas Day/ Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Reflection – *The Kerry Christmas Carol by Sigerson Clifford*

Read by: Staff or students

Brush the floor and clean the hearth,
And set the fire to keep,
For they might visit us tonight
When all the world's asleep.

Don't blow the tall white candle out
But leave it burning bright,
So that they'll know they're welcome here
This holy Christmas night.

Leave out the bread and meat for them,
And sweet milk for the Child,
And they will bless the fire, that baked
And, too, the hands that toiled.

For Joseph will be travel-tired,
And Mary pale and wan,
And they can sleep a little while
Before they journey on.

They will be weary of the roads,
And rest will comfort them,
For it must be many a lonely mile
From here to Bethlehem.

Conclusion:

Leader / Chaplain:
As we leave school today, may the light of Christ, which shines in the Christmas candle, guide us. May we share that light with everyone we meet, bringing hope, peace, and love to our families, friends, and community. Amen.

Final carol – Silent Night/ Away in a Manger