

Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child

John Francis Smith

Born 1st May 2015

Gathering

We gather in the name of God who brings us to birth, walks with us in Jesus, and gives us life in the Spirit.

(All say) **“People were bringing little children to Jesus, and he took them up in his arms and blessed them.”**

The Parents are asked: What name do you wish to give this child?

John Francis Smith

We come together to give thanks to our loving and life-giving God for the birth of John. We will anoint him with holy oil, a symbol of healing and strengthening. We will speak John’s name in the presence of God and of this gathering. This name will be a sign of his very essence both in the physical and spiritual places. Finally we will bless him, listening for the voice of the Divine, whispering softly God’s joy at his being.

(All Say) **“This is my child, my beloved, in whom I delight”.**

We pray that this service will be one small step for John into the faith of Jesus Christ and the life of the Church.

Scripture Reading: Luke 2: 41-52

Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Assuming that he was in the group of travellers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, 'Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety.' He said to them, 'Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favour.

A Homily is Preached

Anointing of Parents

The calling by God to be a parent is the most sacred of all vocations. When Divinity chose to share our human journey in the person of Jesus the Christ, God entrusted that fragile form to the care of Mary and Joseph. God now comes among us in relying on the gentle love of *Dad* and *Mum*.

We recognise their calling and the sacred trust given to them.

Dad and *Mum*, I anoint you and confirm you in your calling as John's parents. May God equip you with all you need to love and nurture him on life's journey.

Anointing of Grand-parents (optional)

The Prophets, Simeon and Anna waited patiently for the Christ child. They had longed for the day when God would send such a little one into the world. *Grandfather Mum, Grandmother Mum, Grandfather Dad and Grandmother Dad* have also waited for John. We bless them and anoint them in their sacred vocation as Grandparents to John. May you, like Anna and Simeon, encourage, nurture and challenge John in his journey with the Divine.

Anointing of Godparents (optional)

Mum and Dad entrust their precious son to the guidance, love and support of those they have chosen as his Godparents: insert names.
(*God parents are blessed and anointed*)

Anointing and Blessing of «Childs_First_Name»

- ❖ John, we anoint your mind, may you have wisdom.
- ❖ John, we anoint your ears, may you hear what is right.
- ❖ John, we anoint your lips, may you speak only truth.
- ❖ John, we anoint your eyes, may you see the beauty in all creation.
- ❖ John, we anoint your hands, may you do what is good.
- ❖ John, we anoint your heart, may you love deeply and fully.
- ❖ John, we anoint your feet, may you walk the path of peace.

John may God bless you and keep you,
may God's face shine upon you and the Holy One be gracious to you.
May God lift up the light of Divine countenance upon you
and grant you peace this day and forever more. **Amen.**

(All say) **We your family and friends, promise (as best we are able)
to walk with you, to laugh and cry with you,
to share with you what we have learnt on our journey
and to share your journey,
where ever that may lead.**

Gift Giving (optional)

John, *Mum and Dad* the Magi (wise men) came bearing gifts for the Christ child to ensure he had the best start, and to honour him.

Please accept this gift of a children's bible from us.

May you read it together and as you do may your own story, and God's story, become one story.

Welcome to this Place

The Anglican Parish of Hunters Hill acknowledges the Wallumedegal people as the traditional custodians of this land, and pays respect to elders past and present.

With them we honour this place, this land and its custodians and pray that John may grow and be nurtured by all that is good around him.

John,

+may this land surround you in her blessing,

+nurture you in your growing,

+sustain you in your living and

+receive you at the end of your journey. **Amen.**

Final Blessing

Go in peace and may God who is Creator of all

nurture you and hold you safe;

God in Christ walk by your side;

and God the Holy Spirit send you out with joy. **Amen.**