

# ***Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child***

*John Francis Smith*

Born 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020

## **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 18: 15-18**

15 People were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them; and when the disciples saw it, they sternly ordered them not to do it. <sup>16</sup>But Jesus called for them and said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. <sup>17</sup>Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.'

### **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 John**

- ❖ 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 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.**