

# Liturgy Alive of Feria

## Introduction

Few things, if any, are more beautiful on the human – and the divine – level than the encounter between persons. An encounter is a great joy and a grace. The first reading (from the Song of Songs) speaks of the encounter between a suitor and the young woman he loves; this is probably an image of the love between God and Israel. The second option (from Zeph) describes the joy of Jerusalem because God stays with his people.

In the gospel, Elizabeth encounters Mary; even the unborn John the Baptist encounters the Savior and his mother. Deeper than meetings between people in business, science, politics, or their jobs, are the understanding, love and sharing of real human encounters. This is the kind of encounter that awaits us with the Lord on Christmas and in this eucharist. Encounters are even deeper when God is a partner of them.

### Opening Prayer

God, we tend to lose ourselves  
in the bustle and stir of the day,  
in our work and our petty worries.  
Give us the freshness of heart  
to look for the things that matter,  
those that make our lives deeply human  
and at the same time open us  
to your world and to your values.  
Make us long to encounter you with joy,  
that we may discover again the quality  
of gratuitous giving, of respect,  
and of carefree, self-forgetting love,  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

## General Intercessions

- That the deeper coming of Christ to us on Christmas fill us all with gratitude and joy, we pray:

- That God may give us the gift of having many friends, we pray:

- That we may learn to appreciate people and rejoice in their gifts and talents, we pray:

#### **Prayer over the Gifts**

Lord God, loving Father,  
in this eucharist you encounter us again  
through your Son Jesus Christ.  
In these signs of bread and wine  
may we really meet him  
from person to person.  
Let him set our hearts afire with his Spirit,  
that we give up our self-made securities  
and dare with him to become  
your people and your world  
  
in Christ Jesus our Lord.

#### **Prayer after Communion**

God, our Father,  
we have encountered your Son  
in his word and his body.  
Let him go with us now  
to speak through us your word  
of courage and lasting hope  
and to make us his body to the world,  
that every encounter among people  
may from now on become  
a blessing and a grace and a joy,  
and a commitment to one another and to you,  
  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

#### **Blessing**

The coming of Christ has brought joy to the world. With him, there is hope. No more room for sadness and fear! Even the cross can lead to joy! May almighty God make you people of joy and bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

