



Today's Readings

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 23, 2018

Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

First Reading

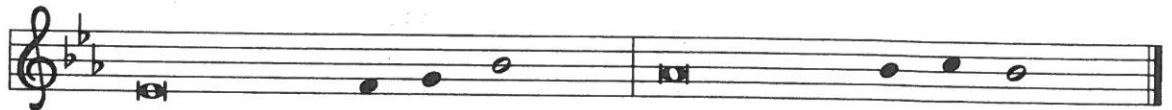
Micah 5:2-5a

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans of
Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to rule in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days.
³Therefore he shall give them up until
the time
when she who is in labor has brought
forth;

then the rest of his kindred shall return
to the people of Israel.
⁴And he shall stand and feed his flock in
the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the
LORD his God.
And they shall live secure, for now he
shall be great
to the ends of the earth;
^{5a}and he shall be the one of peace.

Psalmody

Luke 1:46b-55; tone 4



My soul proclaims the greatness
of the Lord,
⁴⁷my spirit rejoices
in God my Savior,
⁴⁸for you, Lord, have looked with favor
on your lowly servant.
From this day all generations
will call me blessed:
⁴⁹you, the Almighty,
have done great things for me
and holy is your name.
⁵⁰You have mercy
on those who fear you,
from generation to generation.
⁵¹You have shown strength
with your arm

and scattered the proud
in their conceit,
⁵²casting down the mighty
from their thrones
and lifting up the lowly.
⁵³You have filled the hungry
with good things
and sent the rich away empty.
⁵⁴You have come to the aid
of your servant Israel,
to remember
the promise of mercy,
⁵⁵the promise made to our forebears,
to Abraham and his
children forever.

or Psalm 80:1-7 [not printed]

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,
 "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,
 but a body you have prepared for me;
⁶in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.
⁷Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God'
 (in the scroll of the book it is written of me)."

⁸When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), ⁹then he added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. ¹⁰And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Gospel

Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴²and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

[⁴⁶And Mary said,
 "My soul magnifies the Lord,
⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
⁴⁸for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
 and holy is his name.
⁵⁰His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.
⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
⁵²He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
 and lifted up the lowly;
⁵³he has filled the hungry with good things,
 and sent the rich away empty.
⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,
⁵⁵according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
 to Abraham and to his descendants forever."]