



## Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, by your gracious providence your servant John the Baptist was born to Elizabeth and Zechariah. Grant to your people the wisdom to see your purpose and the openness to hear your will, that the light of Christ may increase in us, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## First Reading

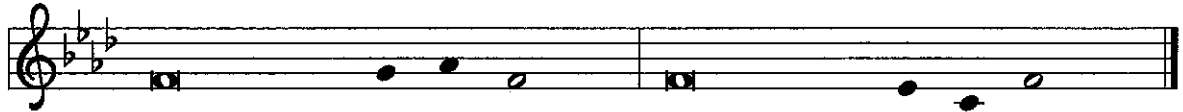
Malachi 3:1-4

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. <sup>2</sup>But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like

fullers' soap; <sup>3</sup>he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. <sup>4</sup>Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

## Psalm

Psalm 141; tone 8



O LORD, I call to you;  
come <sup>1</sup> to me quickly;  
hear my voice when I <sup>1</sup> cry to you.  
<sup>2</sup>Let my prayer rise before  
<sup>1</sup> you as incense,  
the lifting up of my hands  
as the <sup>1</sup> evening sacrifice.  
<sup>3</sup>Set a watch before my <sup>1</sup> mouth, O LORD,  
and guard the door <sup>1</sup> of my lips.  
<sup>4</sup>Let not my heart  
incline to any <sup>1</sup> evil thing.  
Let me not be occupied  
in wickedness with evildoers,  
nor eat of <sup>1</sup> their sweet foods.  
<sup>5</sup>Let the righteous strike me;  
their rebukes,  
as oil upon the head,  
are not to <sup>1</sup> be refused.  
Yet my prayers are continually  
against the deeds <sup>1</sup> of the wicked.

<sup>6</sup>Let their rulers  
be thrown down up- <sup>1</sup> on the stones,  
that they may hear my words,  
for <sup>1</sup> they are sweet.  
<sup>7</sup>Just as one who tills the earth  
<sup>1</sup> breaks the rock,  
so let their bones be scattered  
at the mouth <sup>1</sup> of the grave.  
<sup>8</sup>But my eyes are turned to <sup>1</sup> you,  
Lord GOD;  
in you I take refuge;  
strip me not <sup>1</sup> of my life.  
<sup>9</sup>Guard me from the trap  
that they have <sup>1</sup> laid for me  
and from the snares of <sup>1</sup> evildoers.  
<sup>10</sup>Let the wicked fall  
into <sup>1</sup> their own nets,  
while I a- <sup>1</sup> lone pass through.

## Gospel

## Luke 1:57-67 [68-80]

Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. <sup>58</sup>Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

<sup>59</sup>On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. <sup>60</sup>But his mother said, "No; he is to be called John." <sup>61</sup>They said to her, "None of your relatives has this name." <sup>62</sup>Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him. <sup>63</sup>He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And all of them were amazed. <sup>64</sup>Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God. <sup>65</sup>Fear came over all their neighbors, and all these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Judea. <sup>66</sup>All who heard them pondered them and said, "What then will this child become?" For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him.

<sup>67</sup>Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy:

[<sup>68</sup>"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.

<sup>69</sup>He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David,

<sup>70</sup>as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,

<sup>71</sup>that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.

<sup>72</sup>Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant,

<sup>73</sup>the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us <sup>74</sup>that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies,

might serve him without fear, <sup>75</sup>in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

<sup>76</sup>And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,

<sup>77</sup>to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins.

<sup>78</sup>By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us,

<sup>79</sup>to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,

to guide our feet into the way of peace."

<sup>80</sup>The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day he appeared publicly to Israel.]

TODAY'S READINGS John the Baptist

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**Next Sunday's Readings:** Lamentations 3:22-33 or Wisdom 1:13-15; 2:23-24; Psalm 30; 2 Corinthians 8:7-15; Mark 5:21-43.

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