

THE WORD OF THE LORD : TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

At the Solemn Eucharist at 11 o'clock

THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

As the church anticipates celebrating the Incarnation, the readings for the day highlight eschatological themes — things concerned with the end of time, the last days. The effect is to recall that the birth of a particular baby is part of the culmination of God's will for the world. The texts have in common the healing of the sick as signs of the new order. Isaiah celebrates the transformation of the wilderness into a fertile land; the healing of the blind, the deaf, the lame, and the dumb; and the restoration of Zion. In the Gospel lection, John the Baptist is confirmed as the one who prepared the way for Jesus, and Jesus is confirmed as the Messiah through his healing of the sick and preaching of good news to the poor. The Magnificat praises God for acts of salvation, and the Epistle of James affirms that the coming of the Lord is at hand and counsels patience.

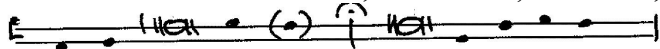
FIRST READING: Isaiah 35.1-10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveller, not even fools shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The word of the Lord

R/. Thanks be to God

PSALM: 146.4-10—*Lauda, anima mea; Tone VIII,2*



- 4 BLESS-ÈD IS HE that hath the God of Jacob for his **help** :
and whose hope is **in** the Lord his God;
- 5 Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that therein **is** :
who keepeth his pro-mise for ev-er;

- 6 Who helpeth them to right that suffer **wrong** : who feed-eth the hun-gry.
- 7 The Lord looseth men out of **pri**-son : the Lord giveth **sight** to the blind.
- 8 The Lord raiseth up them that are **fall**-en : the Lord lov-eth the righ-teous.
- 9 The Lord careth for the strangèrs; he upholdeth the fatherless and **wi**-dow :
as for the way of the ungodly, he turneth **it** up-side down.
- 10 The Lord thy God, O Sion, shall be King for ever-**more** :
and throughout all **ge**-ne-ra-tions.

SECOND READING: James 5.7-10

Be patient, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The word of the Lord

R/. Thanks be to God

SEQUENCE HYMN

Hymn 66 "Creator of the starry height"

CONDITOR ALME SIDERUM

GOSPEL: Matthew 11.2-11

R/. Glory be to thee, O Lord

Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me. And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

The Gospel of Christ

R/. Praise be to thee, O Christ