

THE WORD OF THE LORD : TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

At the Solemn Eucharist at 11 o'clock THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

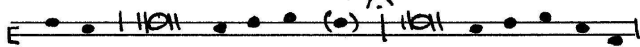
As Christmas approaches, the Gospel accounts of the birth of Jesus command our attention more and more. Today's reading from Matthew, with its report of Joseph's marriage to Mary, who is "with child of the holy Spirit," is the most obvious selection for the last Sunday of Advent. The Old Testament lesson contains the lines quoted by Matthew, Isaiah 7.14. The verses from Psalm 80, a petition of the people for help from their enemies, anticipates the Gospel's reference to Joseph and present the situation of need to which the coming of Jesus responds. The key lines of the Epistle are those of the christological confession that set the coming of Jesus in the context of God's activity in history.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 7.10-16

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, "Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test." Then Isaiah said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a young woman shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

The word of the Lord
R/. Thanks be to God

PSALM: 80.1-7, 17-19—*Qui regis Israel; Tone IV,4*



- 1 HEAR, O thou Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph **like** a flock :
show thyself also, thou that sittest **up**-on the cher-u-bim.
- 2 Before Ephraim, Benjamin, **and** Man-as-seh :
stir up thy strength, **and** come and help us.
- 3 Turn us a-**gain**, O God :
show the light of thy countenance, **and** we shall be whole.
- 4 O Lord **God** of hosts :
how long wilt thou be angry with thy **peo**-ple that pray-eth?
- 5 Thou hast fed them with the **bread** of tears :
and hast given them plen-**teous**-ness of tears to drink.
- 6 Thou makest us a very strife un-**to** our neigh-bours :
and our ene-**mies** laugh us to scorn.
- 7 Turn us again, O **God** of hosts :
show the light of thy countenance, **and** we shall be whole.

- 17 Let thy hand be upon the man **of** thy right hand :
and upon the son of man, whom thou madest so **strong** for thine own self.
- 18 And so shall we not go **back** from thee :
O let us live, and we will **call** up-on thy Name.
- 19 Turn us again, O Lord **God** of hosts :
show the light of thy countenance, **and** we shall be whole.

SECOND READING: Romans 1.1-7

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ. To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word of the Lord
R/. Thanks be to God

SEQUENCE HYMN

Hymn 192. "The God whom earth, and sea, and sky"

EISENACH

GOSPEL: Matthew 1.18-25

R/. Glory be to thee, O Lord

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.

The Gospel of Christ
R/. Praise be to thee, O Christ