

THE WORD OF THE LORD : TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

*At the Liturgy at Nine-Thirty*

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

*The Gospel for this Sunday narrates the story of the holy family's flight to Egypt to escape the wrath of Herod, and then their settlement in Nazareth. The Old Testament lesson, although addressing an earlier situation, speaks of a saviour as well as a protecting angel and thus shows analogies to the Gospel reading. The psalm is a powerful song that has all the cosmos as well as the heavenly hosts praising God, whereas the Epistle focusses on the descendants of Abraham who, like the patriarch himself, went down to and came out of Egypt.*

COLLECT OF THE DAY

*Presider:* Almighty God, you have shed upon us the new light of your incarnate Word. May this light, enkindled in our hearts, shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. People: Amen.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 63.7-9

I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord, the praiseworthy acts of the Lord, because of all that the Lord has done for us, and the great favour to the house of Israel that he has shown them according to his mercy, according to the abundance of his steadfast love. For he said, "Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely"; and he became their Saviour in all their distress. It was no messenger or angel but his presence that saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

The word of the Lord

R/. Thanks be to God

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: 148



God sent re-demp-tion un-to his peo-ple.

Hallelujah! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights. Praise him, all you angels of his; praise him, all his hosts. Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars. Praise him, heaven of heavens, and you waters above the heavens. R/.

Let them praise the name of the Lord; for he commanded, and they were created. He made them stand fast for ever and ever; he gave them a law which shall not pass away. Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea-monsters and all deeps; fire and hail, snow and fog, tempestuous wind, doing his will. R/.

Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars; wild beasts and all cattle, creeping things and wingèd birds. Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the world; young men and maidens, old and young together. R/.

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name only is exalted, his splendour is over earth and heaven. He has raised up strength for his people and praise for all his loyal servants, the children of Israel, a people who are near him. Hallelujah! R/.

SECOND READING: Hebrews 2.10-18

It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, saying, "I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you." And again, "I will put my trust in him." And again, "Here am I and the children whom God has given me." Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. For it is clear that he did not come to help the angels, but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

The word of the Lord

R/. Thanks be to God

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: Colossians 3.15,16

Alleluia. Alleluia. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts; let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. Alleluia.

GOSPEL: Matthew 2.13-23

R/. Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Now after the wise men had left, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son." When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more." When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He will be called a Nazarene."

The Gospel of Christ

R/. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

*Presider:* God of light, in the birth of your Son we see your glory. May we who share in this mystery grow daily in your love. This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

*People:* Amen

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

*Presider:* Source of truth and joy, may we who have received the gift of divine life always follow the way of your Son. This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

*People:* Amen



"Adoration of the Magi" painted by Giotto di Bondone (1266-1337)