Evening Prayer

Thursday, December 25, 2003

The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)

OPENING

O God, come to my assistance.

Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

HYMN

Silent Night, Holy Night

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright.
Round yon virgin mother and child,
holy infant, so tender and mild;
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing alleluia;
Christ the Savior is born,
Christ the Savior is born.

Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace;
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Psalm 144 *I Will Extol You, O God My King (Part I)*

> *Ant. Today Christ is born for us; glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.*

I will exalt you, O God my King, and I will bless your name forever and ever.

Every day I will bless you, and I will praise your name forever and ever.

Great is the Lord and greatly praiseworthy, and of his greatness there is no end.

Generation after generation will praise your works, and they will declare your power.

They will speak of the magnificence of the glory of your holiness, and they will narrate your wonders.

And they will speak of the virtue of your terrible acts, and they will describe your greatness.

They will pour out the memory of the abundance of your sweetness, and they will rejoice in your justice.

The Lord is gracious and merciful, patient and of great mercy.

The Lord is sweet in all things and his mercy is over all his works.

Let all your works confess to you, O Lord, and let your holy ones bless you.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

> *Ant. Today Christ is born for us; glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.*

Psalm 144 *I Will Extol You, O God My King (Part II)*

> *Ant. Today Christ is born for us; glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.*

They will speak of the glory of your kingdom, and they will declare your power,

to make your power known to the sons of men, and the glory of the magnificence of your kingdom.

Your kingdom is a kingdom of all ages, and your dominion is throughout all generations.

The Lord is faithful in all his words and holy in all his works.

The Lord lifts up all who have fallen, and he raises up all who have been crushed.

The eyes of all hope in you, O Lord, and you give them food in due season.

You open your hand and fill every living thing with blessing.

The Lord is just in all his ways and holy in all his works.

The Lord is near to all who call upon him; to all who call upon him in truth.

He will do the will of those who fear him, and he will hear their prayer and save them.

The Lord guards all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy.

My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord, and let all flesh bless his holy name, forever and ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

> *Ant. Today Christ is born for us; glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.*

NEW TESTAMENT CANTICLE

NEW TESTAMENT CANTICLE (EPHESIANS 1:3–10)

Blessed is God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavens, in Christ.

Just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, so that we would be holy and immaculate in his sight, in charity.

He predestined us into the adoption of sons through Jesus Christ for himself,

according to the purpose of his will, unto the praise of the glory of his grace,

with which he has favored us in his beloved Son.

In him, we have redemption through his blood, the remission of sins, according to the riches of his grace,

which has abounded in us with all wisdom and prudence.

So that he might make known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure,

as he purposed in him, for the stewardship of the fullness of time,

to recapitulate all things in Christ, those in the heavens and those on earth.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

SHORT READING

HEBREWS 1:1–2

> In times past, God spoke in partial and various ways to our ancestors through the prophets; in these last days, he spoke to us through a Son.

RESPONSORY

V. A holy day has dawned upon us. Come, you nations, and adore the Lord.

R. For today a great light has descended upon the earth. Alleluia.

V. Sing to the Lord a new song,

R. for he has done marvelous things. Alleluia.

GOSPEL CANTICLE: MAGNIFICAT (LUKE 1:46-55)

THE CANTICLE OF MARY (MAGNIFICAT) (LUKE 1:46–55)

> *Ant. Holy Mother of God, ever-virgin Mary, who have given birth to the King of kings, intercede for us.*

My soul magnifies the Lord.

And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.

Because he has regarded the humility of his handmaid; for behold, from henceforth all generations will call me blessed.

Because he who is powerful has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

And his mercy is from generation to generation for those who fear him.

He has shown might with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart.

He has deposed the powerful from their seat, and he has exalted the humble.

He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has received Israel, his servant, being mindful of his mercy.

As he spoke to our fathers: to Abraham and to his offspring forever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

> *Ant. Holy Mother of God, ever-virgin Mary, who have given birth to the King of kings, intercede for us.*

EVENING INTERCESSIONS

As evening falls during this Christmas season, let us pray in the name of the one who was born for us, saying:

For peace in our world, that the peace proclaimed at Bethlehem may become a reality among nations: we pray to you, O Lord.	*Glory to God in the highest.*
For those who are isolated or forgotten at this time of year, that they may know they are not alone: we pray to you, O Lord.	*Glory to God in the highest.*
For children, that this season may be one of wonder, security, and love for them: we pray to you, O Lord.	*Glory to God in the highest.*
For all who mourn, especially those who have lost a loved one since last Christmas, that hope may comfort them: we pray to you, O Lord.	*Glory to God in the highest.*
For our bishop and all who lead our church, that they may reflect the light of Christ in their ministry: we pray to you, O Lord.	*Glory to God in the highest.*
For those who have died, that they may share in the eternal Christmas of heaven: we pray to you, O Lord.	*Glory to God in the highest.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Let us pray as the Lord himself has taught us:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

God our Father, you made this holy night to shine with the splendor of the true light. As we celebrate the birth of your Son, may our lives reflect his glory; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

DISMISSAL

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

May almighty God bless us: the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

MARIAN ANTIPHON

ALMA REDEMPTORIS MATER

Loving Mother of the Redeemer, gate of heaven, star of the sea, assist your people who have fallen, yet strive to rise again. To the wonderment of nature you bore your Creator, yet remained a virgin after as before. You who

received Gabriel's joyful greeting, have pity on us poor sinners.