Office of Readings

Tuesday, January 6, 2004

The Epiphany of the Lord

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.

INVITATORY

Ant. Come, let us adore the Lord on this great solemnity.

Come, let us exult in the Lord; let us shout with joy to God our salvation.

Let us come before his face with praise and exult in him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God and a great king above all gods.

For the Lord does not cast off his people; for in his hand are all the ends of the earth.

And the heights of the mountains belong to him.

For the sea is his, and he made it; and his hands formed the dry land.

Come, let us adore and fall down before God; let us weep before the Lord who made us.

For he is the Lord our God; and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.

Today, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

As in the provocation, according to the day of temptation in the wilderness,

where your fathers tempted me; they tried me and saw my works.

For forty years I was close to this generation, and I said: "They always err in heart."

And these people have not known my ways, so I swore in my wrath that they will not enter into my rest.

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. Come, let us adore the Lord on this great solemnity.

HYMN

What Child Is This

> What child is this, who, laid to rest,
> on Mary's lap is sleeping?
> Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
> while shepherds watch are keeping?

PSALMODY

Psalm 28 *The Voice of the Lord*

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

Bring to the Lord, O sons of God, bring to the Lord the offspring of rams; bring to the Lord glory and honor.

Bring to the Lord glory for his name; adore the Lord in his holy court.

The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the God of majesty has thundered.

The Lord is over many waters.

The voice of the Lord is in power; the voice of the Lord is in magnificence.

The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; indeed, the Lord will break the cedars of Lebanon.

And he will reduce them to small pieces, like a calf of Lebanon, and the beloved one will be like the son of the rhinoceros.

The voice of the Lord divides the flame of fire.

The voice of the Lord shakes the desert; and the Lord will shake the desert of Kadesh.

The voice of the Lord prepares the stags and will reveal the dense forests; and in his temple all will speak his glory.

The Lord causes the flood to dwell; and the Lord will sit as king in eternity.

The Lord will give strength to his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace.

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 29 *Thanksgiving for Rescue*

> *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 Lord, for you have supported me and have not made my enemies rejoice over me.

O Lord my God, I cried out to you and you healed me.

O Lord, you led my soul out of hell; you saved me from those who descend into the pit.

Sing to the Lord, O you his holy ones, and confess to the memory of his holiness.

For wrath is in his indignation, and life is in his good will. Weeping will tarry for an evening, and joy will come in the morning.

But in my abundance I said: "I will not be moved forever."

O Lord, in your good will, you had provided power to my beauty. But you turned your face away from me, and I became troubled.

To you, O Lord, I will cry out, and I will pray to my God.

What benefit is there in my blood, while I descend into corruption? Will dust confess to you? Or will it declare your truth?

The Lord heard and had mercy on me; the Lord became my helper.

You have turned my mourning into joy for me; you have cut away my sackcloth, and you have encircled me with gladness.

So that my glory may sing to you, and I may not regret: O Lord my God, I will confess to you 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. Today Christ is born for us; glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.*

Psalm 30 *Into Your Hands*

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

In you, O Lord, I have hoped; let me not be confounded forever; rescue me in your justice.

Incline your ear to me; hasten to deliver me.

Be a God, a protector, and a house of refuge for me, so as to accomplish my salvation.

For you are my strength and my refuge; and for your name's sake you will lead me and nourish me.

You will lead me out of this snare which they have hidden for me; for you are my protector.

Into your hands I commend my spirit; you have redeemed me, O Lord, the God of truth.

You have hated those who hold to vanity without purpose. But I have hoped in the Lord.

I will exult and rejoice in your mercy; for you have seen my humility.

You have saved my soul from necessity, and you have not enclosed me in the hands of my enemy.

You have placed my feet in a spacious place.

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am afflicted; my eye has been troubled by rage, my soul, and my belly.

For my life has diminished in sorrow, and my years in groaning.

My virtue has been weakened in poverty, and my bones have been disturbed.

I have become a reproach among all my enemies, and very much so to my neighbors; and a source of fear to those I know.

Those who saw me withdrew from me; I was forgotten, like someone dead from the heart.

I was made like a useless vessel.

For I have heard the reproach of many who dwell around me.

In assembling together against me, they consented to take away my soul.

But I have trusted in you, O Lord; I said, "You are my God."

My times are in your hands; deliver me from the hands of my enemies and from those who persecute me.

Make your face shine upon your servant; save me in your mercy.

O Lord, let me not be confounded, for I have called upon you.

Let the impious be confounded and be led down into hell.

Let deceitful lips become dumb, which speak iniquity against the just, with pride and with abuse.

How great is the multitude of your sweetness, O Lord, which you have hidden for those who fear you!

You have perfected it for those who hope in you, in the sight of the sons of men.

You will hide them in the secret of your face from the disturbance of men.

You will protect them in your tabernacle from the contradiction of tongues.

Blessed is the Lord, for he has shown his wonderful mercy to me in a fortified city.

But I said in the excess of my mind: "I am cast away from before your eyes."

Therefore, you heard the voice of my prayer, when I cried out to you.

O love the Lord, all you his saints, for the Lord will seek truth, and will repay abundantly those who act with pride.

Be strengthened, and let your heart be robust, all you who hope in the Lord.

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.*

FIRST READING: SCRIPTURE

ISAIAH 9:6-7

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

RESPONSORY

V. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

R. and we have seen his glory.

V. Full of grace and truth,

R. we have seen his glory.

SECOND READING: PATRISTIC OR HAGIOGRAPHIC

Saint Gregory of Nazianzus

Oration 38, On the Theophany

Christ Is Born

> Christ is born, glorify him. Christ comes from heaven, go and meet him. Christ descends to earth, let us be raised. Let all the world sing to the Lord; let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad for his sake who was first in heaven and is now on earth. Christ is here in the flesh, let us exult with trembling and with joy: with trembling because of our sins, with joy because of our hope. Once again the darkness is dispersed; once again light is created. Let the people who sat in the darkness of ignorance now see the great light of full knowledge. The old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. The letter gives way, the spirit gains the ascendancy. The shadows flee away, the truth comes in upon them. Christs is born of a virgin. O great wonder! The creator of time enters into time. He, who is without beginning, begins. He becomes what he was not, while remaining still what he was. This is the mystery of the Nativity.

TE DEUM

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CONCLUDING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, the good news of your birth was first proclaimed by angels. May the words of the church's prayer proclaim that same good news to our hearts; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Let us praise the Lord.
And give him thanks.