Office of Readings

Thursday, June 24, 2004

The Nativity of Saint John the Baptist

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

O Splendor of God's Glory Bright

O Splendor of God's glory bright,
O thou that bringest light from light,
O Light of light, light's living spring,
O Day, all days illumining!

O thou true Sun, on us thy glance
let fall in royal radiance;
the Spirit's sanctifying beam
upon our earthly senses stream.

The Father, too, our prayers implore,
Father of glory evermore;
the Father of all grace and might,
to banish sin from our delight.

All laud to God the Father be;
all praise, eternal Son, to thee;
all glory, as is ever meet,
to God the holy Paraclete.

Psalm 55 *In God I Trust*

> *Ant. Praise to you, Lord God, now and forever.*

Have mercy on me, O God, for man has trampled on me; all day long he has afflicted me, fighting against me.

My enemies have trampled on me all day long; for many who fight against me are from on high.

In the day when I am afraid, I will hope in you.

In God I will praise my words; in God I have hoped, I will not fear what flesh can do to me.

All day long they have detested my words; all their thoughts are against me for evil.

They will dwell and hide themselves; they will watch my heel, just as they waited for my soul.

For nothing, you will save them; in your anger you will break the peoples, O God.

I have announced my life to you; you have set my tears in your sight, as also in your promise.

Then my enemies will be turned back, on whatever day I will call upon you.

Behold, I know that you are my God.

In God I will praise the word; in the Lord I will praise his speech.

In God I have hoped; I will not fear what man can do to me.

In me, O God, are the vows you will receive; I will render praises to you.

For you have rescued my soul from death, and my feet from falling, so that I may be pleasing before God in the light of the living.

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. Praise to you, Lord God, now and forever.*

Psalm 56 *Steadfast Trust in God*

> *Ant. Praise to you, Lord God, now and forever.*

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me; for my soul trusts in you.

And in the shadow of your wings I will hope, until iniquity passes by.

I will cry out to the most high God, the God who has benefited me.

He has sent from heaven and rescued me; he gave over to reproach those who trampled on me.

God has sent his mercy and his truth, and he has rescued my soul from the midst of the lion cubs.

I have slept troubled; the sons of men, their teeth are weapons and arrows, and their tongue is a sharp sword.

Be exalted, O God, above the heavens, and your glory above all the earth.

They have prepared a snare for my feet, and they have bowed down my soul.

They have dug a pit before my face, and they fell into it.

My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready; I will sing and compose a psalm.

Arise, my glory; arise, psaltery and harp; I will arise in the early morning.

I will confess to you among the peoples, O Lord, and I will compose a psalm to you among the nations.

For your mercy has been magnified, even to the heavens, and your truth even to the clouds.

Be exalted, O God, above the heavens, and your glory above all the 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.

> *Ant. Praise to you, Lord God, now and forever.*

Psalm 57 *Rescue from the Wicked*

> *Ant. Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy, for in you my soul takes refuge.*

If truly you speak justice, judge what is right, O sons of men.

For in your heart you work iniquity on the earth; your hands weave injustices.

The wicked have become estranged from the womb; they have wandered astray from the womb; they have spoken false things.

Their fury is like that of a serpent; like that of a deaf asp, stopping up its ears.

Which will not hear the voice of the enchanters, nor of the wizard casting spells wisely.

God will crush their teeth in their mouth; the Lord will break the molars of the lions.

They will come to nothing, like water flowing away; he has bent his bow until they are weakened.

Like wax that is melted, they will be taken away; fire has fallen upon them, and they will not see the sun.

Before your thorns could perceive the bramble, he swallows them up as if alive, as if in wrath.

The just will rejoice when he has seen the retribution, he will wash his hands in the blood of the sinner.

And a man will say: "Truly there is a fruit to the just one; truly there is a God judging them on the 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.

> *Ant. Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy, for in you my soul takes refuge.*

FIRST READING: SCRIPTURE

PSALM 119:105,107

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. I am severely afflicted; give me life, O Lord, according to your word.

RESPONSORY

V. Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on us.
R. Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on us.
V. You who rose from the dead,
R. have mercy on us.

SECOND READING: PATRISTIC OR HAGIOGRAPHIC

Blessed John Henry Newman
Grammar of Assent, Chapter 10

The Illative Sense and Faith

> I am what I am, or I am nothing. I cannot think, reflect, or judge about my being without starting from the very point which I aim at concluding. My ideas are all assumptions, and I am ever moving in a circle. I cannot avoid being, as it were, sole and independent of everything else. How, then, am I to get outside of myself, that I may with my utmost certainty pronounce upon what is external to me? Starting, then, with myself, I pursue my way, and my guide is the rule of duty, truth, and virtue — what I call conscience. So it is the case with religious faith. Conscience leads to the knowledge of God; to some real perception of him, which perception, however feeble, is a step toward that fuller knowledge which is the gift of grace. Faith is the acceptance of what we cannot fully understand, on the authority of one whose truthfulness and love we have come to trust. It is, in the end, the most rational act of the mind, because it accepts truth from a source more reliable than any other: from God himself.

TE DEUM

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CONCLUDING PRAYER

Lord, grant us that listening heart which Solomon asked for, that we may hear your word and be formed by it; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Let us praise the Lord.
And give him thanks.