Office of Readings

Thursday, December 29, 2005

Saint Thomas Becket, Bishop and Martyr

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. Christ the Savior is born. Come, let us adore him.

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. Christ the Savior is born. Come, let us adore him.

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 13 *The Fool Who Denies God*

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

The fool has said in his heart: "There is no God." They are corrupt and have become abominable in their ways; there is no one who does good, not even one.

The Lord has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men, to see if there is anyone who understands or seeks God.

They have all turned aside; together they have become useless; there is no one who does good, not even one.

Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have acted deceitfully; the poison of asps is under their lips.

Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood.

Destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace they have not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes.

Will all those who work iniquity not come to know it? They consume my people like food.

They have not called upon the Lord; therefore they trembled there with fear, where there was no fear.

For the Lord is in the just generation; you have confounded the counsel of the poor man, because the Lord is his hope.

Who will give from Zion the salvation of Israel? When the Lord will have brought back the captivity of his people, Jacob will rejoice, and Israel will be glad.

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 14 *The Guest of God*

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

O Lord, who will dwell in your tabernacle? Or who will rest in your holy mountain?

He who enters without blemish and who works justice.

He who speaks truth in his heart, who has not acted deceitfully with his tongue, nor has done evil to his neighbor, nor has accepted a reproach against his neighbors.

In his sight the malign is brought to nothing, but he glorifies those who fear the Lord.

He who swears to his neighbor and does not deceive him;

he who has not given his money out at interest, and has not accepted bribes against the innocent.

Whoever does these things will not be moved 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 15 *God Is My Inheritance*

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

Preserve me, O Lord, for I have hoped in you.

I have said to the Lord: "You are my God, for you have no need of my good things."

But for the saints who are in his land, he has made all my desires wonderful in them.

Their infirmities have been multiplied; afterward they hastened.

I will not gather together their convocations of blood, nor will I be mindful of their names through my lips.

The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and my cup; it is you who will restore my inheritance to me.

The boundaries have fallen to me in excellent places; for my inheritance is excellent to me.

I will bless the Lord who has given me understanding; moreover my reins have also corrected me, even until night.

I had foresight of the Lord in my sight always; for he is at my right hand, so that I will not be moved.

Because of this, my heart has rejoiced, and my tongue has exulted, and moreover, my flesh will rest in hope.

For you will not abandon my soul to hell, nor will you allow your holy one to see corruption.

You have made known to me the ways of life; you will fill me with joy with your face; at your right hand are delights even to the end.

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

LUKE 2:10-12

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord."

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 Maximus of Turin
Sermon 61 on the Nativity

The Sun of Justice

> A holy day dawns for us on which our Lord is born. It is called in holy scripture the day of the Lord because God, the creator of all days, has made it his own day in a special way. On this day Christ is born and holy church exults because the Sun of Justice has arisen. There is good reason to call Christ the Sun. The visible sun illumines the world; this Sun illumines the heart. The one maintains the order of the seasons; this one gives order to the life of the soul. The one appears and then sets; this one, once he has risen in the faithful heart, never sets. So it is that this Sun, in rising, filled the whole world with his light. Before his coming, everything was covered with the shadows of the old sin and all lay under the darkness of error. But now that the Light of the world has been born, we who were darkness have become light in the Lord, and we who were blind have received sight by our faith in him.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

O God, let the proclamation of the early church ring in our hearts: the Word became flesh and we have seen his glory. Grant us a share in that vision; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Let us praise the Lord.
And give him thanks.