

Sunday 31 December 2017: THE FIRST SUNDAY of CHRISTMAS

Collect

Almighty God, who wonderfully created us in your own image and yet more wonderfully restored us through your Son Jesus Christ: grant that, as he came to share in our humanity, so we may share the life of his divinity; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and for ever. **Amen.**

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

Isaiah 61.10 - 62. 3

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations. For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will give. You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 148(vv7 - 14)

7 Praise the / Lord upon earth:

ye dragons and all deeps;

8 Fire and hail, snow and ice:

wind and storm, fulfilling his word;

9 Mountains and all / hills:

fruitful I trees and I all I cedars;

10 Beasts and all cattle:

birds of the air and creeping things;

11 Kings of the earth and all peoples:

Princes and all judges of the world;

12 Young men and maidens:

old men and youths together.

13 Let them praise the name of the Lord:

for his name only is exalted, and his glory is above heaven and earth.

14 He hath lifted up the horn of his people, bringing praise to all his servants:

even to the children of Israel, a people that is nigh unto him. Praise ye the Lord.

A reading from Paul's Letter to the Galatians

Galatians 4. 4 - 7

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!' So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to Saint Luke.

Luke 2. 15 - 21

Glory to you, O Lord.

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sunday 7 January 2017: THE EPIPHANY of our LORD

Collect

Gracious God, who by the leading of a star manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth: mercifully grant that we, who know you now by faith, may at last behold your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

Isaiah 60. 1 - 6

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms. Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 72(vv10 - 15)

10 May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles give presents:
the kings of Sheba and Seba bring their gifts.

11 May all kings fall down before him:
and all nations do him service.

12 For he shall deliver the poor when he crieth:
the needy also and him that hath no helper.

13 He shall have pity upon the lowly and poor:
and shall preserve the lives of the needy.

14 He shall deliver them from oppression and violence:
and dear shall their blood be in his sight.

15 Long may he live, and may there be given unto him of the gold of Sheba:
may prayer be made for him continually, and may men bless him every day.

A reading from the St Paul's Letter to the Ephesians

Ephesians 3. 1 - 12

This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles - for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit:

that is, the Gentiles have become fellow-heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given to me by the working of his power. Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to Saint Mark.

Matthew 2. 1 - 12

Glory to you, O Lord.

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.' When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: "And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel." Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sunday 14 January 2017: THE SECOND SUNDAY of EPIPHANY

Collect

Almighty God, in Christ you make all things new: transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace, and in the renewal of our lives make known your heavenly glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

A reading from the First Book of the Prophet Samuel

1 Samuel 3. 1 - 10

Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord under Eli. The word of the Lord was rare in those days; visions were not widespread. At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was. Then the Lord called, 'Samuel! Samuel!' and he said, 'Here I am!' and ran to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' But he said, 'I did not call; lie down again.' So he went and lay down. The Lord called again, 'Samuel!' Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' But he said, 'I did not call, my son; lie down again.' Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. The Lord called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' Then Eli perceived that the Lord was calling the boy. Therefore Eli said to Samuel, 'Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening." ' So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

Now the Lord came and stood there, calling as before, 'Samuel! Samuel!' And Samuel said, 'Speak, for your servant is listening.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 139

1 O Lord thou hast searched me out and known me: thou knowest my down-sitting,
and mine uprising, thou understandest my thoughts from afar.

2 Thou art ever about my path and the places where I rest:
and art acquainted with all my ways.

3 For lo there is not a word in my mouth:
but thou O Lord knowest it altogether.

4 Thou hast protected me behind and before:
and hast covered me with thine hand.

5 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me:
so excellent that I cannot attain unto it.

6 Whither shall I go from thy spirit:
or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

7 If I climb up into heaven thou art there:
if I make my bed in the grave thou art there also.

8 If I fly on the wings of the morning:

or alight in the uttermost parts of the west,
9 Even there shall thy hand lead me:
and thy right hand shall hold me.
10 If I say 'Surely the darkness shall cover me:
and my day be I turned to night',

A reading from Revelation

Revelation 5. 1 - 10

Then I saw in the right hand of the one seated on the throne a scroll written on the inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals; and I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, 'Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?' And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it. And I began to weep bitterly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. Then one of the elders said to me, 'Do not weep. See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.' Then I saw between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders a Lamb standing as if it had been slaughtered, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. He went and took the scroll from the right hand of the one who was seated on the throne. When he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell before the Lamb, each holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. They sing a new song: 'You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slaughtered and by your blood you ransomed for God saints from every tribe and language and people and nation; you have made them to be a kingdom and priests serving our God, and they will reign on earth.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to Saint John.

John 1. 43 - 51

Glory to you, O Lord.

The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, 'Follow me.' Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, 'We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth.' Nathanael said to him, 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' Philip said to him, 'Come and see.' When Jesus saw Nathanael coming towards him, he said of him, 'Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!' Nathanael asked him, 'Where did you come to know me?' Jesus answered, 'I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.' Nathanael replied, 'Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!' Jesus answered, 'Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these.' And he said to him, 'Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sunday 21 January 2017: **THE THIRD SUNDAY** of EPIPHANY

Collect

Almighty God, whose Son revealed in signs and miracles the wonder of your saving presence: renew your people with your heavenly grace, and in all our weakness sustain us by your mighty power; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

A reading from the Second Book of the Prophet Samuel **Genesis 14. 17 - 20**

After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). And King Melchizedek of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was priest of God Most High. He blessed him and said, 'Blessed be Abram by God Most High, maker of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!' And Abram gave him one-tenth of everything.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 128

- 1 Blessed are all they that fear the Lord:
even they that walk in his ways.
- 2 Thou shalt eat the labours of thine hands:
O well is thee and happy shalt thou be.
- 3 Thy wife within the walls of thine house:
shall be as the fruitful vine;
- 4 Thy children round about thy table:
shall be as the olive branches.
- 5 Lo thus shall the man be blessed:
that feareth the Lord in his heart.
- 6 May the Lord bless thee out of Zion:
mayest thou see Jerusalem in prosperity all thy life long.
- 7 Mayest thou see thy children's children:
and upon Israel may there be peace.

A reading from Revelation

Revelation 19. 6 - 10

Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunder-peals, crying out, 'Hallelujah!

For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready; to her it has been granted to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure' - for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

And the angel said to me, 'Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.' And he said to me, 'These are true words of God.' Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, 'You must not do that! I am a

fellow-servant with you and your comrades who hold the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to Saint John.

John 2. 1 - 11

Glory to you, O Lord.

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, 'Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.' Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sunday 28 January 2017: THE FOURTH SUNDAY of EPIPHANY

Collect

Creator God, who in the beginning commanded the light to shine out of darkness: we pray that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ may dispel the darkness of ignorance and unbelief, shine into the hearts of all your people, and reveal the knowledge of your glory in the face of Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

A reading from the Deuteronomy

Deuteronomy 18. 15 - 20

The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. This is what you requested of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: 'If I hear the voice of the Lord my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die.' Then the Lord replied to me: 'They are right in what they have said. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak - that prophet shall die.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 111

- 1 Praise ye the Lord. I will give thanks unto the Lord with my whole heart:
in the company of the upright and among the congregation.
- 2 The works of the Lord are great:
sought out by all them that have I pleasure therein.
- 3 My work is worthy to be praised and had in honour:
and his righteousness endureth for ever.
- 4 He hath made his marvellous works to be had in remembrance:
the Lord is gracious and merciful.
- 5 He hath given food unto them that fear him:
he shall ever be mindful of his covenant
- 6 He hath shewed his people the power of his works:
for he gave them the herit age of the nations.
- 7 The works of his hands are faithful and just:
all his commandments are true.
- 8 They stand fast for ever and ever:
and are done in truth and equity.
- 9 He sent redemption unto his people, he commanded his covenant for ever:
holy is his name and to be held in awe.
- 10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all
they that do thereafter:

his praise endureth forever.

A reading from Revelation

Revelation 12. 1 - 5a

A great portent appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pangs, in the agony of giving birth.

Then another portent appeared in heaven: a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. Then the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bear a child, so that he might devour her child as soon as it was born. And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to Saint Mark.

Mark 1. 21 - 28

Glory to you, O Lord.

They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, 'What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.' But Jesus rebuked him, saying, 'Be silent, and come out of him!' And the unclean spirit, throwing him into convulsions and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, 'What is this? A new teaching - with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.' At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.