

Readings + The Nativity of Our Lord + December 25, 2020

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you gave us your only Son to take on our human nature and to illumine the world with your light. By your grace adopt us as your children and enlighten us with your Spirit, through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

First Reading John 1:1-14

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

²The Word was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through the Word, and without the Word not one thing came into being.

What has come into being ⁴in the Word was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.

⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰The Word was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of human will, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

Second Reading Isaiah 9:2-7

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined.

³You have multiplied the nation,

you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.

⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

⁶For 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.

⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom.

He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Third Reading Isaiah 52:7-10

⁷How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,

who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

⁸Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see the return of the LORD to Zion.

⁹Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the LORD has comforted his people, and has redeemed Jerusalem.

¹⁰The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Fourth Reading Hebrews 1:1-4

¹Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, ²but in these last days God has spoken to us by a Son, whom God appointed heir of all things, through whom God also created the worlds.

³The Son is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and sustains all things by his powerful word.

When the Son had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

Holy Gospel Luke 2:1-20

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered.

⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.

⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see— I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom God favors!"

¹⁵When 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."

¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.

¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.