

Readings for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

1st Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder. For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor.

Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

Psalms 96

Refrain: All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the whole earth. Sing to the Lord and bless his name; proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations and his wonders among all peoples. For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; he is more to be feared than all gods. **Refrain**

As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; but it is the Lord who made the heavens. Oh, the majesty and magnificence of his presence! Oh, the power and the splendour of his sanctuary! Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the peoples; ascribe to the Lord honour and power. Ascribe to the Lord the honour due his name; bring offerings and come into his courts. **Refrain**

Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; let the whole earth tremble before him. Tell it out among the nations: "The Lord is King! he has made the world so firm that it cannot be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity." Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad; let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein. **Refrain**

Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy before the Lord when he comes, when he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with his truth. **Refrain**

2nd Reading: Titus 2:11-14

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ: Luke 2:1-20

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph 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. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And 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. In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 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 Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.'

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

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.