Office of Readings

Saturday, December 20, 2003

Advent, Week 3 — Saturday

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 who is coming to bring salvation to his people.

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 who is coming to bring salvation to his people.

HYMN

The King Shall Come

> The King shall come when morning dawns
> and light triumphant breaks,
> when beauty gilds the eastern hills
> and life to joy awakes.

PSALMODY

Psalm 61 *Trust Only in God*

> *Ant. Your light will dawn, O Lord, and your glory will be seen upon us.*

Will my soul not be subject to God? For from him is my salvation.

For he himself is my God and my Savior; he is my supporter, I will no longer be greatly moved.

How long do you rush against a man? You all kill, as if at a leaning wall and a crumbling fence.

Yet truly they have planned to reject my price; I have run in thirst; they blessed with their mouth, and they cursed with their heart.

Yet truly be subject to God, O my soul; for from him is my patience.

For he himself is my God and my Savior; he is my helper, I will not be displaced.

In God is my salvation and my glory; he is the God of my help, and my hope is in God.

Trust in him, all the congregation of people; pour out your hearts in his sight.

God is our helper forever.

Yet truly, the sons of men are vain; the sons of men are liars in the scales, so that by vanity they are all deceived.

Do not trust in iniquity, and do not desire rapine; if riches abound, do not set your heart upon them.

God has spoken once, I have heard two things: power belongs to God,

and to you, Lord, belongs mercy; for you will render to every man according to his works.

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. Your light will dawn, O Lord, and your glory will be seen upon us.*

Psalm 62 *Seeking God in the Desert*

> *Ant. Your light will dawn, O Lord, and your glory will be seen upon us.*

O God, my God, for you I watch at the break of day.

My soul has thirsted for you; in how many ways has my flesh longed for you.

In a desert land, without way or water, so in the holy land I have appeared before you, to see your power and your glory.

For your mercy is better than life; my lips will praise you.

In this way, I will bless you throughout my life; and in your name I will lift up my hands.

Let my soul be filled as if with marrow and fatness, and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips.

I have remembered you upon my bed; in the morning I will meditate on you.

For you have been my helper, and under the cover of your wings I will rejoice.

My soul has adhered to you; your right hand has upheld me.

But they have sought my soul in vain; they will enter the lower parts of the earth;

they will be delivered to the power of the sword; they will be the portions of foxes.

But the king will rejoice in God; all who swear by him will be praised; for the mouth of those who speak iniquities has been stopped.

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. Your light will dawn, O Lord, and your glory will be seen upon us.*

Psalm 63 *My Soul Thirsts for You*

> *Ant. Your light will dawn, O Lord, and your glory will be seen upon us.*

O God, my God, to you I watch at the break of day.

My soul has thirsted for you; in how many ways has my flesh longed for you.

In a desert land, without way or water, so in the holy land I have appeared before you, to see your power and your glory.

For your mercy is better than lives; my lips will praise you.

In this way, I will bless you throughout my life; and in your name I will lift up my hands.

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My soul has adhered to you; your right hand has upheld me.

But those who seek my soul in vain; they will enter into the lower parts of the earth.

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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. Your light will dawn, O Lord, and your glory will be seen upon us.*

FIRST READING: SCRIPTURE

ISAIAH 35:1-2

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing.

RESPONSORY

V. Come, Lord Jesus, do not delay.

R. Come, Lord Jesus, do not delay.

V. Give new courage to your people,

R. who trust in your word.

SECOND READING: PATRISTIC OR HAGIOGRAPHIC

Saint Andrew of Crete

Sermon on the Nativity

The Mystery Hidden from Ages

> Come then, let us observe the Feast. Truly wondrous is the whole chronicle of the Nativity. For this day the ancient slavery is ended, the devil confounded, the demons take to flight, the power of death is broken, paradise is unlocked, the curse is taken away, sin is removed from us, error driven out, truth has been brought back, the speech of kindliness diffused, and spreads on every side, a heavenly way of life has been introduced into the earth, angels communicate with men without fear, and men now hold speech with angels. Why is this? Because God is now on earth, and man in heaven; on every side all things are come together. The mystery that was hidden from ages and from generations, now made manifest to his saints, was revealed to us. The Godhead appeared in the flesh; the mortal has put on immortality; the temporal has put on the eternal. Let then the whole creation shout for joy, for the Savior has been born among us. Honor and glory be to God who is over all, from whom and through whom and in whom are all things, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

O God, the church prepares for Christmas through prayer and reading of your word. May our prayer today draw us closer to the mystery we are about to celebrate; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Let us praise the Lord.
And give him thanks.