Office of Readings

Saturday, December 24, 2005

Advent, Week 4 — 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 80 *Sing to God Our Strength*

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

Rejoice to God our helper; shout with jubilation to the God of Jacob.

Take up a psalm and give a drum, a pleasant psaltery with a harp.

Blow the trumpet at the new moon, on the notable day of your solemnity.

For it is a precept in Israel, and a judgment for the God of Jacob.

He established it as a testimony in Joseph, when he went out from the land of Egypt.

He heard a tongue which he did not know; he removed his back from burdens.

His hands were serving in baskets.

You called out in tribulation, and I freed you; I heard you in the hidden place of the storm.

I tested you at the waters of contradiction.

Hear, my people, and I will testify against you; O Israel, if you will hear me,

there will be no new god among you, and you will not adore a foreign god.

For I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt; open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.

But my people did not hear my voice, and Israel was not obedient to me.

And so I dismissed them according to the desires of their heart; they will walk in their own inventions.

If only my people had heard me; if only Israel had walked in my ways!

I would have humbled their enemies as almost nothing, and upon those who troubled them I would have sent my hand.

The enemies of the Lord have lied to him, and their time will be forever.

And he fed them from the fat of the wheat, and filled them with honey from the rock.

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 81 *The Judge of the Gods*

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

God has stood in the assembly of gods, and, being in their midst, he judges gods.

"How long will you judge unjustly and accept the persons of the wicked?"

"Judge for the poor and the orphan; give justice to the humble and the poor."

"Rescue the poor and the needy; free him from the hand of the sinner."

They have not known and have not understood; they walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth will be shaken.

I said: "You are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High."

"But you will die like men, and you will fall like one of the princes."

Rise up, O God, judge the earth; for you will inherit among all the nations.

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 82 *A Prayer Against Enemies*

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

O God, who will be like you? Do not be silent, and do not be appeased, O God.

For behold, your enemies have made a noise, and those who hate you have lifted up the head.

They have acted with malice in counsel against your people, and they have deliberated against your holy ones.

They have said: "Come, let us dissipate them from the nations, and let the name of Israel no longer be remembered."

For they have deliberated unanimously; they have made a covenant together against you:

the tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; Moab and the Hagarenes,

Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; the foreigners together with the inhabitants of Tyre.

For Assur also has come with them; they have become a support for the sons of Lot.

Do to them as you have done to Midian and Sisera, as to Jabin at the brook of Kishon.

They perished at En-dor; they became like the dung of the earth.

Place their rulers as Oreb and Zeeb, and Zebah and Zalmunna; all their leaders,

who have said: "Let us gain possession of the sanctuary of God for an inheritance."

My God, make them like a wheel, and like stubble before the wind.

Like a fire that burns a wood, and like a flame burning mountains:

so will you pursue them with your tempest, and disturb them in your wrath.

Fill their faces with shame, and they will seek your name, O Lord.

Let them be ashamed and troubled forever and ever; and let them be confounded and perish.

And let them know that the Lord is your name; you alone are the Most High over all the earth.

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.