Office of Readings

Monday, December 4, 2006

Saint John of Damascus, Priest and Doctor

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 4 *Evening Prayer of Trust*

> *Ant. Come, Lord, and do not delay; have mercy on us, who have sinned against you.*

When I called upon him, the God of my justice heard me; in tribulation you have enlarged me. Have mercy on me, and hear my prayer.

O sons of men, how long will you be dull of heart? Why do you love vanity and seek out falsehood?

Know that the Lord has made his holy one wonderful; the Lord will hear me when I cry out to him.

Be angry, but do not sin; what you say in your hearts, regret it upon your beds.

Offer up a sacrifice of justice and trust in the Lord. Many say, "Who shows us good things?"

The light of your face, O Lord, has been impressed upon us; you have given joy to my heart.

By the fruit of their grain, their wine and oil, they are multiplied.

In peace, together in the selfsame, I will sleep and I will rest.

For you, O Lord, have singularly settled me in hope.

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, Lord, and do not delay; have mercy on us, who have sinned against you.*

Psalm 5 *A Morning Plea*

> *Ant. Come, Lord, and do not delay; have mercy on us, who have sinned against you.*

Give ear to my words, O Lord; understand my cry.

Attend to the voice of my prayer, O my King and my God.

For to you I will pray; O Lord, in the morning you will hear my voice.

In the morning I will stand before you, and I will see; because you are not a God who wills iniquity.

Neither will the malicious dwell near you, nor will the unjust persist before your eyes.

You hate all those who work iniquity; you will destroy all who speak falsehood.

The bloodthirsty and deceitful man the Lord will abominate.

But I, in the multitude of your mercy, will enter your house; I will worship toward your holy temple in your fear.

Lead me, O Lord, in your justice; because of my enemies, direct my way in your sight.

For there is no truth in their mouth; their heart is vain.

Their throat is an open sepulchre; they acted deceitfully with their tongues; judge them, O God.

Let them fall from their devices; according to the multitude of their wickednesses, cast them out, for they have provoked you, O Lord.

But let all who hope in you rejoice; they will exult forever, and you will dwell in them.

And all who love your name will glory in you, for you will bless the just.

O Lord, as with a shield of your good will, you have crowned us.

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, Lord, and do not delay; have mercy on us, who have sinned against you.*

Psalm 6 *Prayer in Distress*

> *Ant. Come, Lord, and do not delay; have mercy on us, who have sinned against you.*

O Lord, do not rebuke me in your indignation, nor chastise me in your wrath.

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak; heal me, O Lord, for my bones are troubled.

And my soul is greatly troubled; but, O Lord, how long?

Return, O Lord, and rescue my soul; save me for the sake of your mercy.

For there is no one in death who is mindful of you, and who will confess you in the underworld?

I have labored in my groaning; every night I will wash my bed; I will water my couch with my tears.

My eye is troubled by rage; I have grown old among all my enemies.

Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity, for the Lord has heard the voice of my weeping.

The Lord has heard my supplication; the Lord has received my prayer.

All my enemies will be put to shame and greatly troubled; they will be turned back and put to shame very suddenly.

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, Lord, and do not delay; have mercy on us, who have sinned against you.*

FIRST READING: SCRIPTURE

ISAIAH 2:3

Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

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 Bernard of Clairvaux

Sermon 5 on Advent

Three Comings of the Lord

> We know that there are three comings of the Lord. The third lies between the other two. It is invisible, while the other two are visible. In the first coming he was seen on earth, dwelling among men. In the final coming all flesh shall see the salvation of our God, and they shall look on him whom they have pierced. The intermediate coming is a hidden one; in it only the elect see the Lord within their own selves, and they are saved. In his first coming our Lord came in our flesh and in our weakness; in this middle coming he comes in spirit and in power; in the final coming he will be seen in glory and majesty. Because this coming lies between the other two, it is like a road on which we travel from the first coming to the last. In the first, Christ was our redemption; in the last, he will appear as our life; in this middle coming, he is our rest and consolation. Do not think that what we say of this middle coming is our own invention; listen to what our Lord himself says: If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Lord, as we await your Son's coming, open our ears to the prophetic word that prepared the way. May these readings deepen our Advent longing; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Let us praise the Lord.
And give him thanks.