

The Eucharist

19 December 2021 ♦ FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Advent is divided into two unequal sections: the first finishes on December 16 and the second begins on December 17. We are well into the second part since the season finishes tomorrow afternoon. The second division is characterised by an increase in intensity in relation to the coming of Jesus. In the words of Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), Jesus, ‘the Word of God, by being born, gave himself to us as an ally and a friend’.



Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She gave a loud cry and said: ‘Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.’

FIRST READING

(Micah 5:1-4)

Micah lived in a village about 40 km southwest, of Jerusalem in the second half of the eighth century BC. The book that bears his name is short – with only 105 verses. On the basis of the beginning of today’s passage, the belief developed some five or six centuries before the birth of Jesus that the messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Today’s excerpt speaks of a ruler over Israel who would come out of Bethlehem for the Lord.

SECOND READING

(Hebrews 10:5-10)

This reading gives us the first thoughts and words of Jesus as he entered our world. He says to his heavenly Father that he came to do his will. All our Christian life is about doing God’s will.

GOSPEL

(Luke 1:39-44)

This Gospel paints a picture of the visit of Mary to her cousin Elizabeth. The words which Elizabeth uses to address Mary are portrayed as happening as a result of the prompting of the Holy Spirit. Elizabeth’s words are those of a prophet, whose primary function is to speak up and to speak out. She pronounces a double blessing: Mary is blessed of all women and the fruit of her womb is both blessed and Elizabeth’s Lord.

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon

(Cf. Is 45:8)

**Drop down dew from above, you heavens,
and let the clouds rain down the Just One;
let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

And with your spirit.

Penitential Act

Brethren (brothers and sisters),
let us acknowledge our sins,
and so prepare ourselves
to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

A brief pause for silence follows.

**I confess to almighty God
and to you, my brothers and sisters,
that I have greatly sinned,
in my thoughts and in my words,
in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,**

And, striking their breast, they say:

**through my fault, through my fault,
through my most grievous fault;
therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,
all the Angels and Saints,
and you, my brothers and sisters,
to pray for me to the Lord our God.**

May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.

Amen.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

(The Gloria is not said.)

Collect

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord,
your grace into our hearts,
that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son
was made known by the message of an Angel,
may by his Passion and Cross
be brought to the glory of his Resurrection.

Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING

(Mic 5:1-4)

A reading from the prophet Micah.

The Lord says this:

You, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
the least of the clans of Judah,
out of you will be born for me
the one who is to rule over Israel;
his origin goes back to the distant past,
to the days of old.

The Lord is therefore going to abandon them
till the time when she who is to give birth gives birth.
Then the remnant of his brothers will come back
to the sons of Israel.

He will stand and feed his flock
with the power of the Lord,
with the majesty of the name of his God.
They will live secure, for from then on he will extend
his power
to the ends of the land.
He himself will be peace.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

(Ps 79:2-3.15-16.18-19)

**R God of hosts, bring us back;
let your face shine on us and we shall be saved.**

1. O shepherd of Israel, hear us,
shine forth from your cherubim throne.
O Lord, rouse up your might,
O Lord, come to our help. **R**
2. God of hosts, turn again, we implore,
look down from heaven and see.
Visit this vine and protect it,
the vine your right hand has planted. **R**
3. May your hand be on the man you have chosen,
the man you have given your strength.
And we shall never forsake you again:
give us life that we may call upon your name. **R**

SECOND READING

(Heb 10:5-10)

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

This is what Christ said, on coming into the world:

You who wanted no sacrifice or oblation,
prepared a body for me.
You took no pleasure in holocausts or sacrifices for sin;
then I said,
just as I was commanded in the scroll of the book,
'God, here I am! I am coming to obey your will.'

Notice that he says first: You did not want what the Law lays down as the things to be offered, that is: the sacrifices, the

oblations, the holocausts and the sacrifices for sin, and you took no pleasure in them; and then he says: Here I am! I am coming to obey your will. He is abolishing the first sort to replace it with the second. And this will was for us to be made holy by the offering of his body made once and for all by Jesus Christ.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

(Lk 1:38)

Alleluia, alleluia!

**I am the handmaid of the Lord:
let what you have said be done to me.
Alleluia!**

GOSPEL

(Lk 1:39-44)



The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

A reading from the holy Gospel
according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Mary set out and went as quickly as she could to a town in the hill country of Judah. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. Now as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She gave a loud cry and said, 'Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord? For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy. Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Profession of Faith

(Apostles' Creed)

**I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,**

*At the words that follow, up to and including the Virgin Mary,
all bow.*

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the
Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and
the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen.**

The priest introduces the Prayer of the Faithful.

Offering the bread, the priest says:

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,
for through your goodness we have received
the bread we offer you:

fruit of the earth and work of human hands,
it will become for us the bread of life.

Blessed be God for ever.

Offering the chalice, the priest says:

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,
for through your goodness we have received
the wine we offer you:

fruit of the vine and work of human hands,
it will become our spiritual drink.

Blessed be God for ever.

Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters),
that my sacrifice and yours
may be acceptable to God,
the almighty Father.

**May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands
for the praise and glory of his name,
for our good
and the good of all his holy Church.**

Prayer over the Offerings

May the Holy Spirit, O Lord,
sanctify these gifts laid upon your altar,
just as he filled with his power the womb of the Blessed
Virgin Mary.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Eucharistic Prayer II

(Preface II of Advent)

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right and just.

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Christ our Lord.

For all the oracles of the prophets foretold him,
the Virgin Mother longed for him
with love beyond all telling,

John the Baptist sang of his coming
and proclaimed his presence when he came.

It is by his gift that already we rejoice
at the mystery of his Nativity,
so that he may find us watchful in prayer
and exultant in his praise.

And so, with Angels and Archangels,
with Thrones and Dominions,
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,

we sing the hymn of your glory,
as without end we acclaim:

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

You are indeed Holy, O Lord,
the fount of all holiness.

Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray,
by sending down your Spirit upon them like the dewfall,
so that they may become for us
the Body and \times Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

At the time he was betrayed
and entered willingly into his Passion,
he took bread and, giving thanks, broke it,
and gave it to his disciples, saying:

TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF IT,
FOR THIS IS MY BODY,
WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.

In a similar way, when supper was ended,
he took the chalice
and, once more giving thanks,
he gave it to his disciples, saying:

TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND DRINK FROM IT,
FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD,
THE BLOOD OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL COVENANT,
WHICH WILL BE Poured OUT FOR YOU AND FOR MANY
FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME.

The mystery of faith.

**Save us, Saviour of the world,
for by your Cross and Resurrection
you have set us free.**

Therefore, as we celebrate
the memorial of his Death and Resurrection,
we offer you, Lord,
the Bread of life and the Chalice of salvation,
giving thanks that you have held us worthy
to be in your presence and minister to you.

Humbly we pray
that, partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ,
we may be gathered into one by the Holy Spirit.

Remember, Lord, your Church,
spread throughout the world,
and bring her to the fullness of charity,
together with **N.** our Pope and **N.** our Bishop
and all the clergy.

Remember also our brothers and sisters
who have fallen asleep in the hope of the resurrection,
and all who have died in your mercy:
welcome them into the light of your face.
Have mercy on us all, we pray,
that with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God,

with blessed Joseph, her Spouse,
with the blessed Apostles,
and all the Saints who have pleased you throughout
the ages,

we may merit to be coheirs to eternal life,
and may praise and glorify you
through your Son, Jesus Christ.

Through him, and with him, and in him,
O God, almighty Father,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honour is yours,
for ever and ever.

Amen.

THE COMMUNION RITE

At the Saviour's command
and formed by divine teaching,
we dare to say:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;**

**thy kingdom come,
thy will be done**

on earth as it is in heaven.

**Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, ...

**For the kingdom,
the power and the glory are yours
now and for ever.**

Lord Jesus Christ, ...

Amen.

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And with your spirit.

*The priest may invite the people to exchange a sign of peace
and Christian fellowship. As the priest breaks the consecrated
host the following is sung or said:*

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.**

Showing the Eucharist to the people, the priest says:

Behold the Lamb of God,
behold him who takes away the sins of the world.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

**Lord, I am not worthy
that you should enter under my roof,
but only say the word
and my soul shall be healed.**

Communion Antiphon

(Is 7:14)

**Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son;
and his name will be called Emmanuel.**

Prayer after Communion

Having received this pledge of eternal redemption,
we pray, almighty God,
that, as the feast day of our salvation draws ever nearer,
so we may press forward all the more eagerly
to the worthy celebration of the mystery
of your Son's Nativity.

Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

May the almighty and merciful God,
by whose grace you have placed your faith
in the First Coming of his Only Begotten Son
and yearn for his coming again,
sanctify you by the radiance of Christ's Advent
and enrich you with his blessing.

Amen.

As you run the race of this present life,
may he make you firm in faith,
joyful in hope and active in charity.

Amen.

So that, rejoicing now with devotion
at the Redeemer's coming in the flesh,
you may be endowed with the rich reward of eternal life
when he comes again in majesty.

Amen.

And may the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit,
come down on you and remain with you for ever.

Amen.

Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Personal Prayer

Lord Jesus, we thank you for your word and for the gift of
yourself in the Eucharist. Your Holy Spirit prepared God's
people to expect you as the shepherd who would work
to bring about peace and reconciliation.

Your whole life was about doing your Father's will. Your
first thought on coming into the world was about doing
his will. You gave your life on the cross because it was
your Father's will. You taught us to pray to the Father:
'Your will be done.'

Teach us to have a great love for your Father's will; to be
like your own mother, Mary, the great model of faith and
obedience. Her reply to the angel was: 'Let it be done to
me in accordance with God's will.'

May the Eucharist we have celebrated keep us faithful to
your Father's will. Amen.