

SUNDAY READINGS & PRAYERS

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

from Ps 45



℣. On your right stands the Queen in garments of gold. (*All repeat*)



The daughters of kings are a-mong your loved ones;
on your right stands the queen in | gold of Ophir.

Listen O daughter, give ear | to my words:
forget your own people and your | father's house. ℣.

So will the king de-lsire your beauty;
he is your lord, so | pay him homage.
The people of Tyre shall | come with gifts;
the richest of the people shall | seek your favour. ℣.

The king's daughter is | clothed with splendour,
her robes embroidered with | cloth of gold.
She is brought to the king with her maid-len companions;
they enter his palace amid | joy and gladness. ℣.

Sons shall be yours in place | of your fathers:
you will make them rulers over | all the earth.
I will make your name to be remem-bered for ever;
therefore shall the peoples praise you from | age to age. ℣.

SECOND READING

Rom 8.18–30

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.

NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

COLLECT

Almighty and everlasting God, who stooped to raise fallen humanity through the child-bearing of blessed Mary: grant that we, who have seen your glory revealed in our human nature and your love made perfect in our weakness, may daily be renewed in your image and conformed to the pattern of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Mic 5.2–5

A reading from the prophet Micah.

Thus says the Lord:—

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labour has given birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth. And he shall be their peace.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Lk 1.38

Alleluia.

Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord:
let it be to me according to your word.

Alleluia.

GOSPEL READING

Lk 1.39–47

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Hear the Gospel ✠ of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy

Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.”

And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

God our Father, your handmaid Mary fed your Son at her virgin breast: nourish us at your altar with the bread of heaven and the cup of salvation; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

POST-COMMUNION

God most high, whose handmaid bore the Word made flesh: we thank you that in this sacrament of our redemption you visit us with your Holy Spirit and overshadow us by your power; strengthen us to walk with Mary the joyful path of obedience and so to bring forth the fruits of holiness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SOLEMN BLESSING

When the Word became flesh, earth was joined to heaven in the womb of Mary: may the love and obedience of Mary be your example. **Amen.**

May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts and homes. **Amen.**

May you be filled with the joy of the Spirit and the gifts of your eternal home. **Amen.**

And the blessing ...