

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

*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.*

**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,  
God, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

**FIRST READING** Micah 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.**

**PSALM** Psalm 79

**RESPONSE:** *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** Hebrews 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**

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

**I am the handmaid of the Lord:**

**let what you have said be done to me.**

**Alleluia!**

**GOSPEL** Luke 1:39-45

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

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.**

**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.**

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

**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.**