

## Readings – Fourth Sunday of Advent 24-12-2023

### Sentence

This child will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.

Luke 1.32–33

### Collect

Gracious God,  
whose eternal Word took flesh among us  
when Mary placed her life at the service of your will:  
prepare our hearts for his coming again  
and keep us steadfast in hope,  
that we may be ready for the coming of his kingdom;  
for his sake, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

## 2 Samuel 7: 1-11, 16

Our first reading is taken from 2 Samuel, Chapter 7 Beginning at Verse 1

<sup>1</sup> Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, <sup>2</sup> the king said to the prophet Nathan, 'See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.' <sup>3</sup> Nathan said to the king, 'Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you.' <sup>4</sup> But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: <sup>5</sup> Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD : Are you the one to build me a house to live in? <sup>6</sup> I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. <sup>7</sup> Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built me a house of cedar?' <sup>8</sup> Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; <sup>9</sup> and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. <sup>10</sup> And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will

plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, <sup>11</sup> from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. <sup>16</sup> Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure for ever before me; your throne shall be established for ever.

Hear the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Psalm: Song of Mary**

Our Psalm today comes from Psalm Song of Mary. I will read one verse, and I invite you to respond with the next verse,

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord:  
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,

**Who has looked with favour on his lowly servant:  
from this day all generations will call me blessed.**

The Almighty has done great things for me:  
and holy is his name.

**God has mercy on those who fear him:  
from generation to generation.**

The Lord has shown strength with his arm:  
and scattered the proud in their conceit,

**Casting down the mighty from their thrones:  
and lifting up the lowly.**

God has filled the hungry with good things:  
and sent the rich away empty.

**He has come to the aid of his servant Israel:  
to remember the promise of mercy,**

The promise made to our forebears:  
to Abraham and his children for ever.

## **Romans 16: 25-27**

Our second reading is taken from the letter of Paul to the Romans, Chapter 16, beginning at Verse 25

<sup>25</sup> Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages <sup>26</sup> but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— <sup>27</sup> to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever! Amen.

Hear the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Luke 1: 26-38**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke, Chapter 1, beginning at Verse 26, **Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' <sup>29</sup> But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. <sup>31</sup> And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup> He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' <sup>34</sup> Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' <sup>35</sup> The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>36</sup> And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup> For nothing will be impossible with God.' <sup>38</sup> Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

This is the Gospel of the Lord,

**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**