

NATIVITY OF THE LORD, PROPER I

December 24-25, 2023

Year B, Revised Common Lectionary

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The Lamb, Detail of Nativity window from St. Stephen's, Oxford, NC, 19th century, from:

Isaiah 9:2-7 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined. You have multiplied exultation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Great will be his authority, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Psalm 96

- ✘ O sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.
- ✘ Sing to the LORD; bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.
- ✘ Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples.
- ✘ For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods.
- ✘ For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the LORD made the heavens.
- ✘ Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.
- ✘ Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
- ✘ Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts.
- ✘ Worship the LORD in holy splendor; tremble before him, all the earth.
- ✘ Say among the nations, "The LORD is king!"

- ✘ The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved. He will judge the peoples with equity."
- ✘ Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar and all that fills it; let the field exult and everything in it.
- ✘ Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the LORD, for he is coming, for he is coming to judge the earth.
- ✘ He will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with his truth.

Titus 2:11-14 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

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Psalms 96 O sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth. Sing to the LORD; bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples. For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the LORD made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary. Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts. Worship the LORD in holy splendor; tremble before him, all the earth. Say among the nations, "The LORD is king! The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved. He will judge the peoples with equity." Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar and all that fills it; let the field exult and everything in it. Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the LORD, for he is coming, for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with his truth.

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Luke 2:1-14, (15-20) In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room. Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

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