

NATIVITY OF THE LORD, PROPER II

December 24-25, 2026

Year B, Revised Common Lectionary

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Shepherds Hear the Good News

Sagrada Familia, Barcelona, Spain, 20th century.

Isaiah 62:6-12 Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have posted sentinels; all day and all night they shall never be silent. You who remind the LORD, take no rest, and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it renowned throughout the earth. The LORD has sworn by his right hand and by his mighty arm: I will not again give your grain to be food for your enemies, and foreigners shall not drink the wine for which you have labored, but those who harvest it shall eat it and praise the LORD, and those who gather it shall drink it in my holy courts. Go through, go through the gates; prepare the way for the people; build up, build up the highway; clear it of stones; lift up an ensign over the peoples. The LORD has proclaimed to the end of the earth: Say to daughter Zion, “Look, your savior comes; his reward is with him and his recompense before him.” They shall be called, “The Holy People, The Redeemed of the LORD,” and you shall be called, “Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken.”

Psalms 97

- ✠ The LORD is king! Let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad!

- ✠ Clouds and thick darkness are all around him; righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.
- ✠ Fire goes before him and consumes his adversaries on every side.
- ✠ His lightnings light up the world; the earth sees and trembles.
- ✠ The mountains melt like wax before the LORD, before the Lord of all the earth.
- ✠ The heavens proclaim his righteousness, and all the peoples behold his glory.
- ✠ All servants of images are put to shame, those who make their boast in worthless idols; all gods bow down before him.
- ✠ Zion hears and is glad, and the towns of Judah rejoice because of your judgments, O God.
- ✠ For you, O LORD, are most high over all the earth; you are exalted far above all gods.
- ✠ You who love the LORD, hate evil; he guards the lives of his faithful; he rescues them from the hand of the wicked.
- ✠ Light dawns for the righteous and joy for the upright in heart.
- ✠ Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous, and give thanks to his holy name!

Titus 3:4-7 But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

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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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