

BEHOLD THE CHILD



December 11, 2019

## **TO SET YOU FREE FROM ALL YOUR SORROW**

Ignorance is bliss. Our excuses for remaining uninformed, even when supported by an old adage, fall apart in the light of the truth. Willful ignorance is not a virtue. Indeed, it goes hand in hand with unbelief.

That is among the lessons flowing from the Magi and Herod. The Magi follow the star, knowing what is true. The One who has been born is King, worthy of being worshiped. Herod, on the other hand, gets the right information from others about where the birth of the King took place, but he remains aloof to the truth. Instead of paying homage, he plots to kill.

Ignorance is not bliss. It destroys faith because faith feeds on the truth. Ignorance also robs us of joy, especially when it comes to the truth of who Christ is. The Magi know who He is, so they rejoice greatly.

We join them in rejoicing because the truth has been given us. Jesus comes,

Lying helpless in a manger, poor and bare and lowly,  
To set you free from all your sorrow wholly.

## Vespers with Holy Communion

**P** In the name of the Father and of the  $\text{†}$  Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** **Amen.**

**P** Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

**P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,

**C** **who made heaven and earth.**

**P** I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

**C** **and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

**P** O almighty God, merciful Father,

**C** **I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

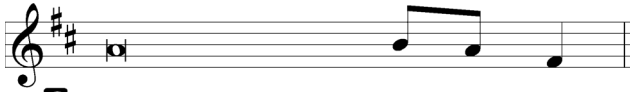
**P** Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the  $\text{†}$  Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** **Amen.**

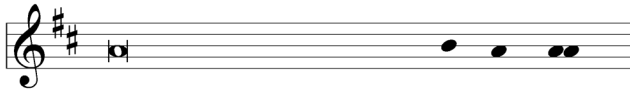
## Advent Versicles



**L** O Lord, o - pen my lips,



**C** and my mouth will de - clare Your praise.



**L** Make haste, O God, to de - liv - er me;



**C** make haste to help me, O Lord.



**C** Glo-ry be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spir - it;



as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and will be for - ev - er. A - men.



*Advent:* Praise to You, O Christ, King who comes to save us.

## Readings From Holy Scripture

### First Reading – Micah 5:2-5a

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 labor 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.

When the Assyrian comes into our land  
and treads in our palaces,  
then we will raise against him seven shepherds  
and eight princes of men;

**P** O Lord, have mercy on us.

**G** **Thanks be to God.**

### Second Reading – 1 Peter 1:3-9

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this

you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

**P** O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

### **Third Reading – Matthew 2:1-12**

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

"And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
for from you shall come a ruler  
who will shepherd my people Israel."

Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found

him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

**P** O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Sermon

### Magnificat



1 My soul now mag - ni - fies the Lord; My spir - it  
 2 For He a - lone who shows such might Has done a -  
 3 His arm is strong; His strength is great. He scat - ters  
 4 He feeds the hun - gry as His own; The wealth - y



leaps for joy in Him. He keeps me in His kind re -  
 maz - ing things to me. His mer - cy flows; His name like  
 those of proud in - tent And casts them down from high es -  
 leave with emp - ty hands. He gives His help to Is - ra -



gard, And I am blest for time to come.  
 light Re - mains in time per - pet - ual - ly.  
 tate, Then gives the low His nour - ish - ment.  
 el; His gra - cious prom - ise al - ways stands.

## Offering

## Kyrie





**C Lord, have mercy.**

**P** For those who bring offerings, those who do good works in this congregation, those who toil, those who sing, and all the people here present who await from the Lord great and abundant mercy, let us pray to the Lord:

**C Lord, have mercy.**

**P** For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord:

**C Lord, have mercy.**

**P** For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and need, let us pray to the Lord:

**C Lord, have mercy.**

**P** For . . . [*additional bids for prayer may be inserted here*] . . . let us pray to the Lord:

**C Lord, have mercy.**

**P** For the faithful who have gone before us and are with Christ, let us give thanks to the Lord:

**C Alleluia.**

**P** Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

**P** Rejoicing in the fellowship of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, one another, and our whole life to Christ, our Lord:

**C To You, O Lord.**

## **Collect for Peace**

**P** O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our

Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

## **Lord's Prayer**

**C** **Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed be Thy name,  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done on earth  
as it is in heaven;  
give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom  
and the power and the glory  
forever and ever. Amen.**

**P** In the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, at His command, and with His own words, we receive His testament:

## **The Words of Our Lord**

**P** Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My  $\text{✠}$  body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

**P** In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them,

saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

## **Distribution**

### **Post-Communion Collect**

**P** Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**G** Amen.

### **Benedicamus and Benediction**

**P** Let us bless the Lord.

**G** Thanks be to God.

**P** The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

**G** Amen.