

## FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY

### Anthem of the Chancel

*Who humbles the spirit of rulers.*

The child from Mary disquieted Herod, and the weeping of Rachel was fulfilled. In Rama there was the killing and shedding of the blood of infants, and with us this day is the salvation of all creatures.

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; from everlasting, and for ever and ever. Amen.*

May the Cross, which was for us a cause of good things, and by which our mortal race was set free, be for us, O my Lord, a mighty bulwark, and by it may we defeat the Evil One and all his wiles.

### The Lections

Genesis 21:1-21

The LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did to Sarah as he had promised. And Sarah conceived, and bore Abraham a son in his old age at the time of which God had spoken to him. Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore him, Isaac. And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. And Sarah said, "God has made laughter for me; every one who hears will laugh over me." And she said, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would suckle children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age."

And the child grew, and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, playing with her son Isaac. So she said to Abraham, "Cast out this slave woman with her son; for the son of this slave woman shall not be heir with my son Isaac." And the thing was very displeasing to Abraham on account of his son. But God said to Abraham, "Be not displeased because of the lad and because of your slave woman; whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for through Isaac shall your descendants be named. And I will make a nation of the son of the slave woman also, because he is your offspring." So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

When the water in the skin was gone, she cast the child under one of the bushes. Then she went, and sat down over against him a good way off, about the distance of a bowshot; for she said, "Let me not look upon the death of the child." And as she sat over against him, the child lifted up his voice and wept. And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God

called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, "What troubles you, Hagar? Fear not; for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him fast with your hand; for I will make him a great nation." Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the skin with water, and gave the lad a drink. And God was with the lad, and he grew up; he lived in the wilderness, and became an expert with the bow. He lived in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

#### 1 Samuel 1:19-end

[Elkanah and his family] rose early in the morning and worshiped before the LORD; then they went back to their house at Ramah. And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the LORD remembered her; and in due time Hannah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Samuel, for she said, "I have asked him of the LORD."

And the man Elkanah and all his house went up to offer to the LORD the yearly sacrifice, and to pay his vow. But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, "As soon as the child is weaned, I will bring him, that he may appear in the presence of the LORD, and abide there for ever." Elkanah her husband said to her, "Do what seems best to you, wait until you have weaned him; only, may the LORD establish his word." So the woman remained and nursed her son, until she weaned him. And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour, and a skin of wine; and she brought him to the house of the LORD at Shiloh; and the child was young. Then they slew the bull, and they brought the child to Eli. And she said, "Oh, my Lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who was standing here in your presence, praying to the LORD. For this child I prayed; and the LORD has granted me my petition which I made to him. Therefore I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he lives, he is lent to the LORD."

And they worshiped the LORD there.

#### **The Shuraya**

Ascribe to the LORD, O sons of men,  
Ascribe to the LORD glory and honor!  
Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;  
Worship the LORD in the court of his Sanctuary!

#### **The Apostle**

Galatians 4:18-5:1

For a good purpose it is always good to be made much of, and not only when I am present with you. My little children, with whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in

you! I could wish to be present with you now and to change my tone, for I am perplexed about you.

Tell me, you who desire to be under law, do you not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave and one by a free woman. But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, the son of the free woman through promise. Now this is an allegory: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. For it is written,

"Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear;  
break forth and shout, you who are not in travail;  
for the children of the desolate one  
are many more than the children of her that is married."

Now we, brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now. But what does the scripture say? "Cast out the slave and her son; for the son of the slave shall not inherit with the son of the free woman." So, brethren, we are not children of the slave but of the free woman.

For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

### **The Zumara**

The chief men of Persia, rejoicing, bore gifts from their land and offered to the Son of the Virgin gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Like a parent they entered and found him who dwelt in the womb of the poor woman, and they bowed down and worshipped, while rejoicing, and offered before him their treasures.

### **The Gospel**

#### Matthew 2

Now when 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 have seen his star in the East, 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 govern my people Israel.'"

Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star 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." When they had heard the king they went their way; and lo, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till 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.

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called my son."

Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

"A voice was heard in Ramah,  
wailing and loud lamentation,  
Rachel weeping for her children;  
she refused to be consoled,  
because they were no more."

But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." And he rose and took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

### **Anthem of the Mysteries**

*Glorify the Lord in his Sanctuary: for the honor of his name: for the name of his Sanctuary is for ever and ever.*

It is meet and right, O Lord, to glorify the mercifulness of your loving-kindness, for you have given us in your compassion the glorious Mysteries, which in their fearfulness angels long to look upon; and you have deemed us worthy in your grace that, when the pure and holy Sacrifice is offered to you, we may all look with boldness upon the comely glory of your greatness, and also cry out with the heavenly hosts and say, Holy, holy, you are holy, O God.

## **Anthem of the Bema**

Lo, the Body and absolving Blood are offered upon the living and life-giving Altar within the Sanctuary of holy Church, and are also ready to be offered upon the holy, glorious, and spiritual Altar, the true one which is in Heaven.

Come together, O peoples. Let us approach him in holiness of our bodies and souls, for this is the Mystery which was hidden, which is given to us for the forgiveness of sins. *Hallelujah, hallelujah!*

### **Verses:**

Lo, the Virgin conceived and bore a Son, and his name was called Emmanuel.

Come together, O peoples. Let us approach him in holiness of our bodies and souls, for this is the Mystery which was hidden, which is given to us for the forgiveness of sins. *Hallelujah, hallelujah!*

For a Savior is born to you today in the city of David, who is Christ the Lord.