

SECOND SUNDAY OF ANNUNCIATION

Anthem of the Chancel

He causes the winds to blow and the waters flow.

In the month of Kanon, in which the earth does not yield fruit, the Lord was pleased to show forth the Fruit in the Virgin which is the Cause of all good things and the good Hope of all creatures. The same is the true Light, Christ, the Lord of all, worshipped with his Father and the Holy Spirit.

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

O Guardian who came for our deliverance and keeps watch over us, may our prayer and petition be for the satisfaction of your will. As the fragrance of the censer of Aaron, the worthy priest in the Tabernacle, was well-pleasing to you, may our prayer be pleasing to you at all times, O my Lord, and bring about tranquillity and mercies in creation.

The Lections

Numbers 22:9-23:1

God came to Balaam and said, "Who are these men with you?" And Balaam said to God, "Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, has sent to me, saying, 'Behold, a people has come out of Egypt, and it covers the face of the earth; now come, curse them for me; perhaps I shall be able to fight against them and drive them out.'" God said to Balaam, "You shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for they are blessed." So Balaam rose in the morning, and said to the princes of Balak, "Go to your own land; for the LORD has refused to let me go with you." So the princes of Moab rose and went to Balak, and said, "Balaam refuses to come with us."

Once again Balak sent princes, more in number and more honorable than they. And they came to Balaam and said to him, "Thus says Balak the son of Zippor: 'Let nothing hinder you from coming to me; for I will surely do you great honor, and whatever you say to me I will do; come, curse this people for me.'" But Balaam answered and said to the servants of Balak, "Though Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the command of the LORD my God, to do less or more. Pray, now, tarry here this night also, that I may know what more the LORD will say to me." And God came to Balaam at night and said to him, "If the men have come to call you, rise, go with them; but only what I bid you, that shall you do."

So Balaam rose in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab. But God's anger was kindled because he went; and the angel of the LORD took his stand in the way as his adversary. Now he was riding on the ass, and his two servants were with him. And the ass saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road, with a drawn sword in his hand; and the ass turned aside out of the road, and went into the field; and Balaam struck the ass, to turn her into the road. Then the angel of the LORD stood in a narrow path between the vineyards, with a wall on either side. And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she pushed against the wall, and pressed Balaam's foot against the wall; so he struck her again. Then the angel of the LORD went ahead, and stood in a narrow place, where there was no way to turn either to the right or to the left. When the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she lay down under Balaam; and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he struck the ass with his staff. Then the LORD opened the mouth of the ass, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?" And Balaam said to the ass, "Because you have made sport of me. I wish I had a sword in my hand, for then I would kill you." And the ass said to Balaam, "Am I not your ass, upon which you have ridden all your life long to this day? Was I ever accustomed to do so to you?" And he said, "No."

Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, with his drawn sword in his hand; and he bowed his head, and fell on his face. And the angel of the LORD said to him, "Why have you struck your ass these three times? Behold, I have come forth to withstand you, because your way is perverse before me; and the ass saw me, and turned aside before me these three times. If she had not turned aside from me, surely just now I would have slain you and let her live." Then Balaam said to the angel of the LORD, "I have sinned, for I did not know that thou didst stand in the road against me. Now therefore, if it is evil in thy sight, I will go back again." And the angel of the LORD said to Balaam, "Go with the men; but only the word which I bid you, that shall you speak." So Balaam went on with the princes of Balak.

When Balak heard that Balaam had come, he went out to meet him at the city of Moab, on the boundary formed by the Arnon, at the extremity of the boundary. And Balak said to Balaam, "Did I not send to you to call you? Why did you not come to me? Am I not able to honor you?" Balaam said to Balak, "Lo, I have come to you! Have I now any power at all to speak anything? The word that God puts in my mouth, that must I speak." Then Balaam went with Balak, and they came to Kiriathhuzoth. And Balak sacrificed oxen and sheep, and sent to Balaam and to the princes who were with him.

And on the morrow Balak took Balaam and brought him up to Bamothbaal; and from there he saw the nearest of the people. And Balaam said to Balak, "Build for me here seven altars, and provide for me here seven bulls and seven rams."

Isaiah 43:14-44:5

Thus says the LORD,

your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel:

"For your sake I will send to Babylon

and break down all the bars,

and the shouting of the Chaldeans will be turned to lamentations.

I am the LORD, your Holy One,

the Creator of Israel, your King."

Thus says the LORD,

who makes a way in the sea,

a path in the mighty waters,

who brings forth chariot and horse,

army and warrior;

they lie down, they cannot rise,

they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:

"Remember not the former things,

nor consider the things of old.

Behold, I am doing a new thing;

now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?

I will make a way in the wilderness

and rivers in the desert.

The wild beasts will honor me,

the jackals and the ostriches;

for I give water in the wilderness,

rivers in the desert,

to give drink to my chosen people,

the people whom I formed for myself

that they might declare my praise.

"Yet you did not call upon me, O Jacob;

but you have been weary of me, O Israel!

You have not brought me your sheep for burnt offerings,

or honored me with your sacrifices.

I have not burdened you with offerings,

or wearied you with frankincense.

You have not bought me sweet cane with money,

or satisfied me with the fat of your sacrifices.

But you have burdened me with your sins,

you have wearied me with your iniquities.

"I, I am He

who blots out your transgressions for my own sake,
and I will not remember your sins.

Put me in remembrance, let us argue together;
set forth your case, that you may be proved right.

Your first father sinned,
and your mediators transgressed against me.

Therefore I profaned the princes of the sanctuary,
I delivered Jacob to utter destruction
and Israel to reviling.

"But now hear, O Jacob my servant,
Israel whom I have chosen!

Thus says the LORD who made you,
who formed you from the womb and will help you:

Fear not, O Jacob my servant,
Jeshurun whom I have chosen.

For I will pour water on the thirsty land,
and streams on the dry ground;

I will pour my Spirit upon your descendants,
and my blessing on your offspring.

They shall spring up like grass amid waters,
like willows by flowing streams.

This one will say, 'I am the Lord's,'
another will call himself by the name of Jacob,
and another will write on his hand, 'The Lord's,'
and surname himself by the name of Israel."

The Shuraya

We have heard with our ears, O God,

And our fathers have told us,

What you did in their days,

In the days of old:

You with your own hand destroyed the nations, but them you planted;

You afflicted the kingdoms, but them you strengthened;

For not by their own sword did they possess the land,

Nor did their own arm deliver them;

But your right hand, and your arm,
In the light of your countenance; for you delighted in them.

The Apostle

Colossians 4:2-end

Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving; and pray for us also, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison, that I may make it clear, as I ought to speak.

Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders, making the most of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer every one.

Tychicus will tell you all about my affairs; he is a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts, and with him Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of yourselves. They will tell you of everything that has taken place here.

Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, and Mark the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you have received instructions—if he comes to you, receive him), and Jesus who is called Justus. These are the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me. Epaphras, who is one of yourselves, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always remembering you earnestly in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God. For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis. Luke the beloved physician and Demas greet you. Give my greetings to the brethren at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house. And when this letter has been read among you, have it read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you read also the letter from Laodicea. And say to Archippus, "See that you fulfil the ministry which you have received in the Lord."

I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my fetters. Grace be with you.

The Zumara

We have thought on your loving-kindness, O God, in the midst of your temple. As your name, O God, so are your praises.

To the ends of the earth your right hand is filled with righteousness. Let Mount Zion be glad! Let the daughters of Judah rejoice!

The Gospel

Luke 1:26-56

In the sixth month [of Elizabeth's pregnancy] the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.

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 father David,
and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever;
and of his kingdom there will be no end."

And Mary said to the angel, "How shall this be, since I have no husband?" And 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 called holy,
the Son of God.

And behold, your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a city of Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the voice of your greeting came to my ears, the babe in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her from the Lord." And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden.
For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed;

for he who is mighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
And his mercy is on those who fear him
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm,
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts,
he has put down the mighty from their thrones,
and exalted those of low degree;
he has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent empty away.
He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
as he spoke to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his posterity for ever."

And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her home.

The Anthem of the Mysteries

Text: Our hearts being sprinkled, and being cleansed of an evil conscience.

My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready.

Let us in awe and love prepare ourselves for the fearful gift of the Mysteries of Christ, and let us adorn ourselves with deeds by which we may be acceptable to the Judge of all, that he may have pity on us when he judges the generations of the world.

Lift up your hands to the Sanctuary and bless the Lord.

Let us in awe and love prepare ourselves for the fearful gift of the Mysteries of Christ, and let us adorn ourselves with deeds by which we may be acceptable to the Judge of all, that he may have pity on us when he judges the generations of the world.

Anthem of the Bema

Exult, O nations, in the presence of our Savior, for in his presence you have delighted in his Bread.

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Verses:

Give thanks, O nations, for the loving-kindness which freely pardons your debts. You have become sharers in the Mystery which is hallowed by spiritual beings.