

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

Anthem of the Chancel

I will bless the Lord always.

Blessed is he who descended and delivered our nature from devouring death.

And blessed is his honored name for ever.

Blessed is he who descended and delivered our nature from devouring death.

The Lections

Deuteronomy 18:9-end

"When you come into the land which the LORD your God gives you, you shall not learn to follow the abominable practices of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, any one who practices divination, a soothsayer, or an augur, or a sorcerer, or a charmer, or a medium, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD; and because of these abominable practices the LORD your God is driving them out before you. You shall be blameless before the LORD your God. For these nations, which you are about to dispossess, give heed to soothsayers and to diviners; but as for you, the LORD your God has not allowed you so to do.

"The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brethren—him you shall heed—just as you desired of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, or see this great fire any more, lest I die.' And the LORD said to me, 'They have rightly said all that they have spoken. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brethren; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And whoever will not give heed to my words which he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him. But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.' And if you say in your heart, 'How may we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?'—when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously, you need not be afraid of him."

Isaiah 48:12-20

"Hearken to me, O Jacob,
and Israel, whom I called!
I am He, I am the first,
and I am the last.
My hand laid the foundation of the earth,
and my right hand spread out the heavens;
when I call to them,
they stand forth together.

"Assemble, all of you, and hear!
Who among them has declared these things?
The LORD loves him;
he shall perform his purpose on Babylon,
and his arm shall be against the Chaldeans.
I, even I, have spoken and called him,
I have brought him, and he will prosper in his way.
Draw near to me, hear this:
from the beginning I have not spoken in secret,
from the time it came to be I have been there."
And now the Lord GOD has sent me and his Spirit.

Thus says the LORD,
your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel:
"I am the LORD your God,
who teaches you to profit,
who leads you in the way you should go.
O that you had hearkened to my commandments!
Then your peace would have been like a river,
and your righteousness like the waves of the sea;
your offspring would have been like the sand,
and your descendants like its grains;
their name would never be cut off
or destroyed from before me."

Go forth from Babylon, flee from Chaldea,
declare this with a shout of joy, proclaim it,
send it forth to the end of the earth;
say, "The LORD has redeemed his servant Jacob!"

The Shuraya

In Judah God is known,
His name is great in Israel.
His tabernacle shall be in Salem,
And his dwelling place in Zion.

The Apostle

Hebrews 6:9-7:3

Though we speak thus, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things that belong to salvation. For God is not so unjust as to overlook your work and the love which you showed for his sake in serving the saints, as you still do. And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness in realizing the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. Men indeed swear by a greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he interposed with an oath, so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God should prove false, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to seize the hope set before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him; and to him Abraham apportioned a tenth part of everything. He is first, by translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then he is also king of Salem, that is, king of peace. He is without father or mother or genealogy, and has neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God he continues a priest for ever.

The Zumara

Sing to the LORD with harps and the sound of melody! With the sound of trumpets sing praise before the King, the LORD!

Let the sea be moved in its fullness; the world and its inhabitants!

The Gospel

John 3:1-21

Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do, unless God is with him." Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born anew.' The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes; so it is with every one who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus said to him, "How can this be?" Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand this? Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen; but you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, the Son of man. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life."

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. He who believes in him is not condemned; he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does what is true comes to the light, that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been wrought in God.

Anthem of the Mysteries

Text: Everything is made new by God.

Sing to the Lord a new song.

Creation observed a wondrous new thing: a new Baptism in the Jordan; the heavens above opening, John in agitation; the living Lamb being baptized; the Spirit coming and resting upon him; and the Father attesting with his word, This is my Beloved in whom I am well pleased.

The world and all its inhabitants.

Creation observed a wondrous new thing: a new Baptism in the Jordan; the heavens above opening, John in agitation; the living Lamb being baptized; the Spirit coming and resting upon him; and the Father attesting with his word, This is my Beloved in whom I am well pleased.

Anthem of the Bema

O nations, sing praise to him who in his many mercies came from on high and in his loving-kindness set up in the Church the table of the Kingdom full of life and delight. The Son of the King gave us his precious Body and his Blood, the cup of salvation. Let us receive him and be pardoned by him.

And with the cherubim and seraphim let us cry out with voices of thanksgiving,
Hallelujah!

Verses:

Who has seen, my brothers, the King who arranged a banquet for his beloved Son, and instead of the usual preparations he made his Son a sacrifice, that by him he might delight his guests? Lo, a new work, the like of which has never been done, for at the wedding-feast the bridegroom administers his own living Body.

And with the cherubim and seraphim let us cry out with voices of thanksgiving,
Hallelujah!

David the king longed for this wedding feast, and daily he sang, All the glory of the king's daughter is within, and she is adorned with fine gold. The prophet showed us the beauty of the banquet mystically, but lo, it is in truth administered in you, O Church.

And with the cherubim and seraphim let us cry out with voices of thanksgiving,
Hallelujah!