

FIRST READING

A Reading from Sirach, of the Wisdom Literature

24:1-4, 12-20

Wisdom's praises come from her own mouth;
She tells of her glory in the midst of her people;
In the assembly of the Cosmic Chorus, she opens her mouth;
In the presence of the heavenly hosts, she sings her glory:
"I came forth from the mouth of the God beyond the galaxies
and I came to earth, covering earth like mist.
My tent was in the highest heavens,
and my throne was in a pillar of cloud.

I took root in a people honored by God,
in God's own portion and heritage.
I have grown tall as a cedar in Lebanon,
as a cypress on Mount Hermon.
I am raised aloft, as a palm in En-Gedi,
as the rose bushes of Jericho.
I have grown tall as a fair olive tree in the field,
and as a plane tree by the water.
I have yielded a perfume like cinnamon and camel's thorn.
I spread my fragrance like choice myrrh,
like sweet spices and the smoke of frankincense in the tent.
I have spread my branches like terebinth,
and my branches are glorious.
Like the vine, I bud forth delights,
and my blossoms bear the fruit of glory and richness.

Come to me, all you who desire me,
and eat your fill of my fruit.
For the memory of me is sweeter than honey,
and Wisdom, sweeter than the honeycomb.

The Wisdom of Our God.

Thanks be to God.

Readings for Epiphany, January 7, 2018

PSALM

Isaiah 60:1-6, 11a

The Psalm response is: We bear our gifts. (*Or sung refrain to "We three Kings"*)

R: We bear our gifts.

Arise, shine out! For your day has come,
and glorious rays shine upon you.

Darkness swaddled the earth.

Long nights have guided you in quiet preparation.
Now, as the Sun begins to increase,
so God's glory, conceived and formed in darkness,
will be brought to birth.

R: We bear our gifts.

All will arise at your rising star,
and rulers will awaken to the brightness of your dawn.

Open your eyes and look around!

See your scattered ones all gather together;
they come to you.

Your daughters and your sons will journey from afar
with young children on the hip.

You will see your people coming home.

You will be radiant with joy, dazzling in the dawn.

R: We bear our gifts.

Your heart will delight and rejoice,
for the abundance of the sea will be brought to you.
Treasures will be laid before you as a peace offering.

A multitude of camels will come to you.

The young camels of Midian and Ephah,
all those from Sheba will come.

They will carry gold and frankincense,
and proclaim the praise of God.

R: We bear our gifts.

By day and by night, your gates will not be shut.

Your gates will always be open to those who seek.

R: We bear our gifts.

SECOND READING

A Reading from Paul's 1st letter to the Corinthians 1:18-25

The message about the cross is foolishness to those who seek winning-power, but to us who are being made whole, the cross is the power of God. For it is written,

*“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”*

Where is the one who is wise? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the “rich and powerful”? For since in the Wisdom of God, the world did not know God through “wisdom”, God was pleased through the foolishness of our proclamation to lead those who trust in it into the fullness of life.

Judeans demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Judeans and absurd to Gentiles. But to those who are called, both Judeans and Greeks: Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

The Word of the Apostle Paul.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL

A Reading from the Good News attributed to Matthew 2:1-12

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod, Magi from the East arrived in Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the infant who has been born Ruler of the Judeans? We observed the child’s star at its rising, and have come to pay homage.” When Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for this is what the prophet wrote:

*‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
Are by no means least among the rulers of Judah,
For from you shall come a ruler
Who is to shepherd my people Israel.’”*

Then Herod summoned the Magi to see him secretly and ascertained from them the time of the star’s appearance. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when found, bring me word that I too may go and pay homage.”

After their audience with Herod, the Magi set out. And behold, the star they had seen at its rising preceded them until it stopped above the place where the child was. They were overjoyed at seeing the star! Entering the house, they saw the child and its mother Mary. Prostrating themselves, they paid homage. Then, they opened their treasures and offered the baby gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their own country by an alternate route.

The Good News of Our God.

Praise to you, Jesus the Christ.