

FIRST READING

A Reading from the First Book of Samuel

1:1-3a, 7, 9-11, 13-17, 20; 2:1, 4-7, 8a-d (edited)

There was a man named Elkanah who had two wives, one named Hannah, the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children... Each year Elkanah man went up from his city to... offer sacrifice to God...at Shiloh...Year after year, when Hannah went up to the house of God, Peninnah would provoke her, and Hannah would weep and refuse to eat...

One year, Hannah ...presented herself before God. At that time Eli the priest was sitting on a chair near the doorpost of God's temple. In her bitterness, Hannah prayed to God, weeping freely, and made this vow: "O Holy One, if you look with pity on the hardship of your servant, if you remember me and do not forget me, if you give your handmaid a... child, I will give the child to You for all the days of their life...Hannah prayed silently. Though her lips were moving, her voice could not be heard.

Eli, thinking she was drunk, said to her, "How long will you make a drunken spectacle of yourself? Sober up from your wine!" "No! Sir!", Hannah answered. "I am an unhappy woman. I've had neither wine nor liquor. I am only pouring out my heart to God. Don't think your servant a worthless. My prayer has been prompted by my deep sorrow and misery." Then, Eli said, "Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have requested."

Hannah conceived and... bore a son whom she named Samuel: "Because I asked God for him."

The Word of an Israelite Court Historian.

Thanks be to God.

Readings for the 4th Sunday in Advent, December 24, 2017

PSALM

1 Samuel 2:1-11

The Psalm response is: God puts to death and God gives life.

R: God puts to death and God gives life.

Hannah conceived and... bore a son whom she named Samuel:

“Because I asked God for him.”... And Hannah rejoiced, singing:

“My heart exults in You, O God!

My horn, my dignity, is exalted in You.

I have swallowed up my enemies. I rejoice in my victory...

R: God puts to death and God gives life.

The bows of the mighty are broken,
while the tottering put on strength.

The well-fed hire themselves out for bread,
while the hungry feast on spoil.

The barren wife bears seven children,
while the mother of many languishes.

God puts to death and God gives life,
casts down and raises up again.

R: God puts to death and God gives life.

God makes the poor and makes the rich, humbles and exalts.

“God raises the needy from the dust,
lifting the poor from the ash heap,
seating them with nobles
and making a glorious throne their heritage.”

R: God puts to death and God gives life.

SECOND READING

A Reading from Paul's letter to the Romans 8:22-26

We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only that, but we ourselves who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we are made whole and complete. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with endurance. Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our tender fragility; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.

The Word of the Apostle Paul.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL

A Reading from the Gospel attributed to Luke 1:39-45 + sung
Magnificat + 56 or 1:39-56)

Glory to you, O God.

During those days, Mary set out and traveled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb...And Mary sang:

*Magnificat sung**

“Holy is Your Name” by David Haas

And Mary remained with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned to her home.

The Gospel of our God.

Thanks be to God.

Readings for the 4th Sunday in Advent, December 24, 2017

If Magnificat recited:

...

And Mary said:

My soul proclaims Your greatness, O God.

My spirit rejoices in You who make me whole.

For You have looked with favor upon me despite my insignificance.

Amazingly, from now on, all generations will call me blessed.

You, O God, have done great things for me and holy is Your name.

You extend mercy and compassion from age to age
to all those who hold You in awe.

You have shown Your sacred strength,
dispersing the arrogant of mind and heart,
casting rulers from their thrones and lifting up the lowly;
filling the hungry with good things
and sending the rich away empty.

You have come to the aid of Your servant Israel,
mindful of Your mercy
and the promise You made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and Sarah and their descendants forever.”

And Mary remained with Elizabeth for about three months and then
returned to her home.

The Gospel of Our God.

Praise to you, Jesus the Christ.