

FIRST READING: Micah 5:2-5a The shepherd king to be born in Bethlehem (*NRSV*)

² But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for Me One who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. ³ Therefore He shall give them up until the time when she who is in labour has brought forth; then the rest of His kindred shall return to the people of Israel. ⁴ And He shall stand and feed His flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now He shall be great to the ends of the earth; ⁵ and He shall be the one of peace.

PSALM: Luke 1:46b-55 (*NRSV*)

^{46b} 'My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, ⁴⁸ for He has looked with favour on the lowliness of His servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is His name. ⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear Him from generation to generation. ⁵¹ He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. ⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; ⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴ He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy, ⁵⁵ according to the promise He made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to His descendants for ever.'

SECOND READING: Hebrews 10:5-10 Christ came to do God's will *(NIV)*

⁵Therefore, when Christ came into the world, He said: 'Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You prepared for Me; ⁶with burnt offerings and sin offerings You were not pleased. ⁷Then I said, "Here I am – it is written about Me in the scroll – I have come to do Your will, My God.'" ⁸First He said, 'Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings You did not desire, nor were You pleased with them' – though they were offered in accordance with the law. ⁹Then He said, 'Here I am, I have come to do Your will.' He sets aside the first to establish the second. ¹⁰And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

GOSPEL: Luke 1:39-45 Mary visits Elizabeth *(MEV)*

³⁹In those days Mary arose and quickly went into the hill country, to a city of Judah, ⁴⁰and entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴²She spoke out with a loud voice, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴Indeed, as soon as the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a completion to those things which were told her by the Lord."