

## SUNDAY MASS

### ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.

**FIRST READING:** Zephaniah 3:14-18.

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM:** Isaiah 12:2-6.

### RESPONSE:

Shout, and sing for joy, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

1. 'Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the Lord God is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation'. With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. **R**
2. 'Give thanks to the Lord, call upon his name; make known his deeds among the nations, proclaim that his name is exalted'. **R**
3. 'Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth. Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel'. **R**

**SECOND READING:** Philippians 4:4-7.

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, alleluia! The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he has sent me to preach good news to the poor. Alleluia.

**GOSPEL:** Luke 3:10-18.

### COMMUNION ANTIPHON:

Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.

## THE WEEK AHEAD

# Live the Word

### Mon 13 Dec St Lucy, VM

Numbers 24:2-7,15-17; Psalm 25; Matthew 21:23-27  
God's love is extravagant and overflowing. It is unconditional and knows no bounds. The God of Psalm 25 and the prodigal son says to us: Your past sins are not who you are. You are my beloved.

### Tue 14 Dec St John of the Cross, PrD

Zephaniah 3:1-2,9-13; Psalm 34; Matthew 21:28-32  
When disruptions and the unexpected happen in our lives, trust that God will be around. God working through the unexpected is at the heart of the gospel... a virgin giving birth, God becoming human.

### Wed 15 Dec Liturgy of the Day

Isaiah 45:6-8,18,21-25; Psalm 85; Luke 7:19-23  
"God will bring people and events into our lives, and whatever we may think about them, they are designed for the evolution of His life in us." – Thomas Keating

### Thu 16 Dec Liturgy of the Day

Isaiah 54:1-10; Psalm 30; Luke 7:24-30  
Many have the misguided notion that God plans our lives for us. In fact God allows us the freedom to make our own choices. God is like a loving parent who stands by us in love no matter what path we choose.

### Fri 17 Dec Liturgy of the Day

Genesis 49:2,8-10; Psalm 72; Matthew 1:1-17  
Advent helps us to see with new eyes. Where is the eye of our heart? Is it limited or expansive? What do we hope to see in one another? Try looking for the hidden good in another.

### Sat 18 Dec Liturgy of the Day

Jeremiah 23:5-8; Psalm 72; Matthew 1:18-24  
In these days before Christmas, as we prepare food and gifts, send cards and letters or travel, be mindful of those who are alone or have a lot less than we do and do something positive for them.

### Sun 19 Dec 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Micah 5:2-5; Psalm 80; Luke 1:39-45  
If the miracle of Jesus' birth came about in less than perfect circumstances and still resulted in human-kind's salvation, why should we doubt what good can come from our own imperfect circumstances?

(KEY: **SOLEMNITY**; **FEAST**; **Memorial**; [Optional Memorial]  
V=Virgin; Pr= Priest; D= Doctor

# Catholic Link

## THE "O" ANTIPHONS

3rd Sunday in Advent • Year C  
Divine Office: Week III • 12 December 2021

# O Root of Jesse, Come

The third "O Antiphon" reads:  
O Root of Jesse, come.

This ensign raised for all to whom the nations pray, before whom kings keep silent: to rescue quickly, come.

The antiphon is inspired by Isaiah 11:1,10: "A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious."

St Paul quotes this in his Letter to the Romans: "...as Isaiah says, 'The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope' (15:12)."

Readers may be familiar with the "Jesse Tree", placed in a church sanctuary during the Advent season, in homes, or used in catechism classes. Jesse trees are an old Christmas tradition, used to gradually build up the story of the Bible from creation to Christmas. Each day during Advent a different symbol is added to the Jesse Tree, such as a piece of fruit (Garden of Eden), a rainbow (Noah and the flood), a picture of a burning bush (Moses), a lamb (the Passover), two stone tablets (the Law) and so on into the New Testament, with things like carpentry tools representing St Joseph, a white lily (traditional symbol of Mary) and a rough rag (representing John the Baptist's penitential clothing). In a word, a Jesse Tree is a symbol that increasingly builds up expectation and longing. The O Antiphons serve the same purpose.

But there is something else we need to look at, and that is the meaning of "root" and



The oldest complete Jesse Tree window, in Chartres Cathedral, 1145

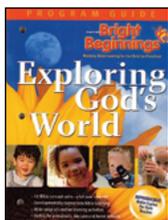
"stem". We're talking genealogy. David was the son of Jesse as we know, and Jesus is referred to as the "son of David". Before David, and between him and Jesus, are all those unpronounceable names in the genealogy in Matthew's Gospel. While reading them may sound monotonous they serve a vital theological purpose. They show the extent to which Jesus, by becoming human like us, identified with all sorts of mixed up, immoral and shady characters (and, in fairness, some good ones too).

Doing family genealogies is a popular hobby these days, especially with so much information on the internet. Not a few enthusiasts have discovered some skeletons in the closet. The genealogy of Jesus was no exception, but the wonderful thing is the hope it gives us. It tells us, in effect, that nothing is beyond the mercy of God and God's abundant redemption. God, in Christ, chose to "root" Himself in fallen human history.

The "root" metaphor in turn becomes the "shoot" metaphor, as a new branch begins. Jesus is the new Moses, the new Jesse, the new David – in a word, a new beginning. As Paul tells us in Romans 8:29, we are called

to be "conformed to the image of Jesus who is the firstborn of many brothers and sisters." Yes, we may have embarrassing human family trees, but now through baptism we have been grafted onto a new shoot.

We call on Jesus our "big brother" to teach us how to live by our new family values. O Root of Jesse, come!



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