

OPENING PRAYER

God our redeemer,
 who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary
 to be the mother of your Son:
 grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour,
 so we may be ready to greet him
 when he comes again as our judge;
 who is alive and reigns with you,
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

FIRST READING - Micah 5.2-5

A reading from the book of the prophet Micah

The LORD says to his people: 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. 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. 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; and he shall be the one of peace.

This is the word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

MAGNIFICAT

Response: *The Almighty has done great things for me and holy is his name*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia! alleluia!
 Greetings, favoured one!
 The Lord is with you.
 Alleluia!

GOSPEL - Luke 1.39-55

*Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke
 Glory to you, O Lord.*

Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.

And Mary said, 'My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord. *Praise to you, O Christ.*

PRAYER AT THE PREPARATION OF THE TABLE

Come, O come Emmanuel,
 you are the way, the truth and the life;
 you are the true vine and the living bread.
 Come, Christ our Saviour,
 come to the world which waits for you;
 who are alive and reign, now and for ever. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Heavenly Father,
 who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary
 to be the mother of the promised saviour:
 fill us your servants with your grace,
 that in all things we may embrace your holy will
 and with her rejoice in your salvation;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*