

Sentence of Scripture

In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
And the Word became flesh and lived among us,
full of grace and truth.

John 1.1, 14

Prayer of the day

God Most High,
whose eternal Word chose a dwelling among us,
that we might live in your presence:
grant us a spirit of wisdom
to know how rich is the glory you have given us,
and how great is the hope to which we are called
in the Word made flesh;
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Readings

Isaiah 62:6-12

⁶Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have posted sentinels; all day and all night they shall never be silent. You who remind the LORD, take no rest,
⁷and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it renowned throughout the earth.

⁸The LORD has sworn by his right hand and by his mighty arm: I will not again give your grain to be food for your enemies, and foreigners shall not drink the wine for which you have labored; ⁹but those who garner it shall eat it and praise the LORD, and those who gather it shall drink it in my holy courts.

¹⁰Go through, go through the gates, prepare the way for the people; build up, build up the highway, clear it of stones, lift up an ensign over the peoples.

¹¹The LORD has proclaimed to the end of the earth: Say to daughter Zion, "See, your salvation comes; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him."

¹²They shall be called, "The Holy People, The Redeemed of the LORD"; and you shall be called, "Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken." (NRSV)

Hear the word of the Lord, **thanks be to God.**

Psalm 97

- ¹ The Lord is king; let the earth rejoice:
let the multitude of islands be glad.
- ² Clouds and darkness are round about him:
**righteousness and justice
are the foundation of his throne.**
- ³ Fire goes before him:
and burns up his enemies on every side.
- ⁴ His lightnings light the world:
the earth sees it and quakes.
- ⁵ The mountains melt like wax before his face:
from before the face of the Lord of all the earth.
- ⁶ The heavens have proclaimed his righteousness:
and all peoples have seen his glory.
- ⁷ They are ashamed, all those who serve idols
and glory in mere nothings:
all gods bow down before him.
- ⁸ Zion heard and was glad,
and the daughters of Judah rejoiced:
because of your judgements, O God.
- ⁹ For you, Lord, are most high over all the earth:
you are exalted far above all gods.
- ¹⁰ The Lord loves those that hate evil:
**the Lord guards the life of the faithful,
and delivers them from the hand of the ungodly.**
- ¹¹ Light dawns for the righteous:
and joy for the true of heart.
- ¹² Rejoice in the Lord, you righteous:
and give thanks to his holy name.

Titus 3:4-8a

- ⁴ But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. ⁶ This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.
- ⁸ The saying is sure.

I desire that you insist on these things, so that those who have come to believe in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works; these things are excellent and profitable to everyone. (NRSV)

Hear the word of the Lord, **thanks be to God.**

Luke 2:1-20

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ **Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered.²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.³All went to their own towns to be registered.⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David.

⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child.⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.¹⁰But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord.¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.'

¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.'

¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child;¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

(NRSV)

This is the Gospel of our Lord, **praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**