

THE NATIVITY OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST – 24 June 2018

The Collect

Almighty God, by whose providence
your servant John the Baptist
was wonderfully born,
and sent to prepare the way of your Son our Saviour
by the preaching of repentance:
lead us to repent according to his preaching,
and after his example
constantly to speak the truth,
boldly to rebuke vice,
and patiently to suffer for the truth's sake;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The First Reading

Isaiah 40:1-11

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.
Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.' A voice says, 'Cry out!' And I said, 'What shall I cry?' All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand for ever. Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, 'Here is your God!' See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

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

The Psalm

85:7-13

Let us see, O Lord, your mercy
and give us your saving help.

**Response: Let us see, O Lord, your mercy
and give us your saving help.**

I will listen to what the Lord God will say:
for he shall speak peace to his people and to the faithful,
that they turn not again to folly.
Truly, his salvation is near to those who fear him:
that his glory may dwell in our land. **Response**

Mercy and truth are met together:
righteousness and peace have kissed each other;
Truth shall spring up from the earth:
and righteousness look down from heaven. **Response**

The Lord will indeed give all that is good:
and our land will yield its increase.
Righteousness shall go before him;
and direct his steps in the way. **Response**

The Second Reading

Galatians 3:23-29

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Galatians.

Before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ; There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.

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

The Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia! **Alleluia!**

You, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways.

Alleluia!

The Gospel Reading

Luke 1:57-66, 80

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to St Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

The time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. Her neighbours and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. But his mother said, 'No; he is to be called John.' They said to her, 'None of your relatives has this name.' Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him. He asked for a writing-tablet and wrote, 'His name is John.' And all of them were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God. Fear came over all their neighbours, and all these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Judea. All who heard them pondered them and said, 'What then will this child become?' For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him. The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day he appeared publicly to Israel.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.