

COLLECT

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.

FIRST READING Micah 5:2-5a

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.

CANTICLE OR PSALM

Either **Luke 1:46b-55**

R *My spirit rejoices in God my Saviour.*

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour.
For he has looked with favour on his lowly servant,
from this day all generations will call me blessed.
The Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his name. **R**

He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm;
he has scattered the proud in their conceit. **R**

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones
and he has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty. **R**

He has come to the help of his servant, Israel,
for he has remembered his promise of mercy.

The promise he made to our forebears;
to Abraham and his children for ever. **R**

Or Psalm 80:1-7

R *Restore us, O God of hosts; show the light of your countenance and we shall be saved.*

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.
In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and come to help us. **R**

O Lord God of hosts,
how long will you be angered despite the prayers of your people?
You have fed them with the bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
You have made us the derision of our neighbours,
and our enemies laugh us to scorn. **R**

SECOND READING

Hebrews 10:5-10

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

When Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt-offerings and sin-offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God' (in the scroll of the book, it is written of me)." When Christ said, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt-offerings and sin-offerings" (these are offered according to the law), then he added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. And it is by God's will that

we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

GOSPEL Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

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."]

POST 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.