

Sunday, January 13, 2019

Baptism of Our Lord / Lectionary 1, Year C

First Reading: Isaiah 43:1-7

Near the end of Israel's exile in Babylon, God promises to bring them home. They need no longer be afraid, because the one who formed, created, and called them by name now redeems them from all their enemies. God declares them precious and honored, and God loves them.

¹But now thus says the LORD,
he who created you, O Jacob,
he who formed you, O Israel:
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.
²When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.
³For I am the LORD your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.
I give Egypt as your ransom,
Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you.
⁴Because you are precious in my sight,
and honored, and I love you,
I give people in return for you,
nations in exchange for your life.
⁵Do not fear, for I am with you;
I will bring your offspring from the east,
and from the west I will gather you;
⁶I will say to the north, "Give them up,"
and to the south, "Do not withhold;
bring my sons from far away
and my daughters from the end of the earth—
⁷everyone who is called by my name,
whom I created for my glory,
whom I formed and made."

The reading may be concluded:

The Word of the Lord.

The assembly responds:

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 29

- ¹Ascribe to the LORD, you gods,
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
- ²Ascribe to the LORD the glory due God's name;
worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.
- ³The voice of the LORD is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders;
the LORD is upon the mighty waters.
- ⁴The voice of the LORD is a powerful voice;
the voice of the LORD is a voice of splendor.
- ⁵The voice of the LORD breaks the cedar trees;
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon;
- ⁶the LORD makes Lebanon skip like a calf,
and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.
- ⁷The voice of the LORD
bursts forth in lightning flashes.
- ⁸The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.
- ⁹The voice of the LORD makes the oak trees writhe and strips the forests bare.
And in the temple of the LORD all are crying, "Glory!"
- ¹⁰The LORD sits enthroned above the flood;
the LORD sits enthroned as king forevermore.
- ¹¹O LORD, give strength to your people;
give them, O LORD, the blessings of peace.

Second Reading: Acts 8:14-17

Peter and John are sent to support the new Christians in Samaria, a group that was recently baptized after hearing the good news of Christ through the preaching of Philip. Here the Samaritans receive the gift of the Holy Spirit in the laying on of hands.

¹⁴Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. ¹⁵The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit ¹⁶(for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). ¹⁷Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

The reading may be concluded:

The Word of the Lord.

The assembly responds:

Thanks be to God.

Gospel: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

The reading opens with questions about the identity of the Messiah. John the Baptist insists that he is not the Messiah; instead he points ahead to one who is coming. And whether the voice of God was heard by all or only by Jesus, God settles the matter: Jesus is God's beloved Son.

¹⁵As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

²¹Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, ²²and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."