

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR SUNDAY
December 25, 2022
Christmas Day

FIRST READING: Micah 5:2-5a

The King will come from Bethlehem

² As for you, Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
though you are the least significant of Judah's forces,
one who is to be a ruler in Israel on my behalf will come out
from you.

His origin is from remote times, from ancient days.

³ Therefore, he will give them up
until the time when she who is in labor gives birth.
The rest of his kin will return to the people of Israel.

⁴ He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
They will dwell secure, because he will surely become

great throughout the earth;

⁵ he will become one of peace.

SECOND READING: Luke 1:26-35, 38

The angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she will have a Son.

²⁶ When Elizabeth was six months pregnant, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a city in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin who was engaged to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David's house. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ When the angel came to her, he said, "Rejoice, favored one! The Lord is with you!" ²⁹ She was confused by these words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said, "Don't be afraid, Mary. God is honoring you. ³¹ Look! You will conceive and give birth to a son,

and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be great and he will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of David his father. ³³ He will rule over Jacob's house forever, and there will be no end to his kingdom."

³⁴ Then Mary said to the angel, "How will this happen since I haven't had sexual relations with a man?"

³⁵ The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come over you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the one who is to be born will be holy. He will be called God's Son.

³⁸ Then Mary said, "I am the Lord's servant. Let it be with me just as you have said." Then the angel left her.

THIRD READING: Matthew 1:18-25

Matthew tells of Jesus' birth.

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. When Mary his mother was engaged to Joseph, before they were married, she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Joseph her husband was a righteous man. Because he didn't want to humiliate her, he decided to call off their engagement quietly.

²⁰ As he was thinking about this, an angel from the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because the child she carries was conceived by the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you will call him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." ²² Now all of this took place so that what the Lord had spoken through the prophet would be fulfilled:

²³ *Look! A virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son,
And they will call him, Emmanuel [which means, "God with
us."]*

²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did just as an angel from God commanded and took Mary as his wife. ²⁵ But he didn't have sexual relations with her until she gave birth to a son. Joseph called him Jesus.

FOURTH READING: Luke 2:8-20

The shepherds go to see the Savior.

There were shepherds living in the fields guarding their sheep at night. ⁹ The Lord's angel stood before them, the Lord's glory shone around them, and they were terrified.

¹⁰ The angel said, "Don't be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you—wonderful, joyous news for all people. ¹¹ Your savior is born today in David's city. He is Christ the Lord. ¹² This is a sign for you: you will find a newborn baby wrapped snugly and lying in a manger." ¹³ Suddenly a great assembly of the heavenly forces was with the angel praising God. They said, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors."

¹⁵ When the angels returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go right now to Bethlehem and see what's happened. Let's confirm what the Lord has revealed to us." ¹⁶ They went quickly and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw this, they reported what they had been told about this child. ¹⁸ Everyone who heard it was amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ Mary committed these things to memory and considered them carefully. ²⁰ The shepherds returned home, glorifying and praising

God for all they had heard and seen. Everything happened just as they had been told.

FIFTH READING: John 1:1-14

John unfolds the mystery of the Incarnation.

¹ In the beginning was the Word
and the Word was with God
and the Word was God.

² The Word was with God in the beginning.

³ Everything came into being through the Word,
and without the Word
nothing came into being.

What came into being

⁴ through the Word was life,
and the life was the light for all people.

⁵ The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness doesn't extinguish the light.

⁶ A man named John was sent from God. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify concerning the light, so that through him everyone would believe in the light. ⁸ He himself wasn't the light, but his mission was to testify concerning the light.

⁹ The true light that shines on all people
was coming into the world.

¹⁰ The light was in the world,

The light came to his own people,
and his own people didn't welcome him.

¹² But those who did welcome him,
those who believed in his name,
he authorized to become God's children,

13 born not from blood
 nor from human desire or passion,
 but born from God.

14 The Word became flesh
 and made his home among us.

We have seen his glory,
 glory like that of a father's only son,
 full of grace and truth.