Lessons & Carols

Gaudete Sunday

17 December 2023
7:00 pm

St Michael's Abbey

We invite you to contemplate the birth of Christ our King with these readings and songs. Please join us in singing the hymns printed here!

Out of respect for the sacredness of this place, we kindly ask you to silence all electronic devices and also to refrain from applause during the entire duration of the service, even at the end. Thank you for your cooperation.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN: *Once in Royal David's City*

1 [Verse 1 sung only by the choir]
Once in royal David's city
Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her Baby
In a manger for His bed:
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little Child.

2 He came down to earth from heaven,
Who is God and Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable,
And His cradle was a stall;
With the poor, and mean, and lowly,
Lived on earth our Savior holy.

3 And through all His wondrous childhood
He would honor and obey,
Love and watch the lowly maiden,
In whose gentle arms He lay:
Christian children all must be
Mild, obedient, good as He.

4 For he is our childhood's pattern;
Day by day, like us He grew;
He was little, weak and helpless,
Tears and smiles like us He knew;
And He feeleth for our sadness,
And He shareth in our gladness.

5 And our eyes at last shall see Him,
Through His own redeeming love;
For that Child so dear and gentle
Is our Lord in heaven above,
And He leads His children on
To the place where He is gone.

6 Not in that poor lowly stable,
With the oxen standing by,
We shall see Him; but in heaven,
Set at God's right hand on high;
Where like stars His children crowned
All in white shall wait around.

Words, C. F. ALEXANDER
Melody, H. J. GAUNTLETT

INTRODUCTION *and* OPENING PRAYER

LESSON 1: Isaiah 7:10 – 14

Blessed Be That Maid Marie
arr. Jim Leininger

LESSON 2: From a sermon by St John Henry Newman

HYMN: *While Shepherds Watched*



5. Thus spoke the angel. Suddenly
appeared a shining throng
of angels praising God, who thus
addressed their joyful song:

6. "All glory be to God on high,
and to the earth be peace;
to those on whom his favor rests
goodwill shall never cease."

Words, NAHUM TATE
Melody, WINCHESTER OLD

LESSON 3: Matthew 2:13-18

Coventry Carol
arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872 – 1958)

LESSON 4: Micah 5:1-4a

Bethlehem Civitas Dei
Gregorian chant responsory

Bethlehem, civitas Dei summi, ex te exiet Dominator Israël, et egressus ejus sicut a principio dierum æternitatis, et magnificabitur in medio universæ terræ, et pax erit in terra nostra dum venerit."

Bethlehem, city of God Most High, from thee shall go forth the Ruler of Israel, and His going forth shall be as from the beginning of the days of eternity, and He shall be magnified in the midst of the earth, and peace shall be in our land when He comes.

LESSON 5: "The Burning Babe"
St Robert Southwell, SJ (1561 – 1595)

God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen
arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams

LESSON 6: From a sermon by St Bernard of Clairvaux

Hymn:

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus



Words, C. WESLEY
Melody, STUTTGART

LESSON 7: Luke 2: 8-20

I Saw Three Ships
arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams

LESSON 8: From a sermon by Saint Anselm

Alma Redemptoris Mater
Marian antiphon for Advent and Christmas

LESSON 9: From a discourse on the Psalms by Saint Augustine

CLOSING PRAYER

RECESSIONAL: *Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending*

1 Lo, he comes with clouds descending,
Once for our salvation slain;
Thousand thousand saints attending
Swell the triumph of his train.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,
Christ the Lord returns to reign.

2 Every eye shall now behold him,
Robed in dreadful majesty:
Those who set at naught and sold him,
Pierced and nailed him to the tree,
Deeply wailing, deeply wailing, deeply wailing,
Shall the true Messiah see.

3 Those dear tokens of His passion
Still his dazzling body bears,
Cause of endless exultation
To his ransomed worshippers:
With what rapture, with what rapture, with what rapture
Gaze we on those glorious scars!

4 Yea! Amen, let all adore thee,
High on Thine eternal throne;
Savior, take the power and glory;
Claim the kingdom for thine own!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,
Thou shalt reign, and Thou alone!

Words, C. WESLEY
Melody, HELMSLEY

In this holy season,
let us especially remember those
who have lost their
lives, families, and homes in the war
that now rages in
those very places which our Savior hallowed by
His Incarnation.

May He be for them a
Light in the darkness
and
a **Refuge** in distress.

Requiescant in pace.