

January 5, 2013

**A reading from the book of Romans chapter 1 verses 1 through 7.**

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**The Word of the Lord.**

***Thanks be to God.***

**Please join me in praying Psalm 84**

**Leader: How lovely is your dwelling place,  
O Lord of hosts!**

People: My soul longs, yes, faints  
for the courts of the Lord;  
my heart and flesh sing for joy  
to the living God.

**Leader: Even the sparrow finds a home,  
and the swallow a nest for herself,**

People: where she may lay her young,  
at your altars, O Lord of hosts,  
my King and my God.

**Leader: Blessed are those who dwell in your house,  
ever singing your praise!**

People: Blessed are those whose strength is in you,  
in whose heart are the highways to Zion.

**Leader: As they go through the Valley of Baca  
they make it a place of springs;  
the early rain also covers it with pools.**

People: They go from strength to strength;  
each one appears before God in Zion.

**Leader: O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer;  
give ear, O God of Jacob!**

People: Behold our shield, O God;  
look on the face of your anointed!  
For a day in your courts is better  
than a thousand elsewhere.

**Leader: I would rather be a doorkeeper  
in the house of my God  
than dwell in the tents of wickedness.**

People: For the Lord God is a sun and shield;  
the Lord bestows favor and honor.

**Leader: No good thing does he withhold  
from those who walk uprightly.**

People: O Lord of hosts,  
blessed is the one who trusts in you!

**All: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy  
Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be  
forever. Amen.**

**Leader: Please stand for the reading of the Gospel.**

*(allow them time to stand)*

**The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ  
according to Matthew.**

***People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.***

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

"And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
for from you shall come a ruler  
who will shepherd my people Israel."

Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced

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exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

**Leader: The Gospel of the Lord**

***People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.***

**Leader: You may be seated.**

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## **Prayer of Confession**

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. *Amen.*