

READINGS FOR THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD SUNDAY

FIRST READING: Isaiah 42:1-9

God's servant is endowed with God's spirit in order to bring justice to the nations. The servant will not exercise authority boisterously or with violence, nor will weariness ever prevent the fulfilling of the servant's task. God's old promises have been fulfilled; the servant's new assignment is to bring light to the nations.

¹ Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
 my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
I have put my spirit upon him;
 he will bring forth justice to the nations.

² He will not cry out or lift up his voice
 or make it heard in the street;

³ a bruised reed he will not break,
 and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;
 he will faithfully bring forth justice.

⁴ He will not grow faint or be crushed
 until he has established justice in the earth,
 and the coastlands wait for his teaching.

⁵ Thus says God, the LORD,
 who created the heavens and stretched them out,
 who spread out the earth and what comes from it,
who gives breath to the people upon it
 and spirit to those who walk in it:

⁶ I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness;
 I have taken you by the hand and kept you;
I have given you as a covenant to the people,
 a light to the nations,

⁷ to open the eyes that are blind,
 to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
 from the prison those who sit in darkness.

⁸ I am the LORD; that is my name;
 my glory I give to no other,
 nor my praise to idols.

⁹ See, the former things have come to pass,
 and new things I now declare;
before they spring forth,
 I tell you of them.

Psalm: Psalm 29

¹ Ascribe to the LORD, you gods,
 ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

² **Ascribe to the LORD the glory due God's name;**
 worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

³ The voice of the LORD is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders;
the LORD is upon the mighty waters.

⁴ **The voice of the LORD is a powerful voice;**
the voice of the LORD is a voice of splendor.

⁵ The voice of the LORD breaks the cedar trees;
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon;

⁶ **the LORD makes Lebanon skip like a calf,**
and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.

⁷ The voice of the LORD
bursts forth in lightning flashes.

⁸ **The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;**
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

⁹ The 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!”

¹⁰ **The LORD sits enthroned above the flood;**
the LORD sits enthroned asking forevermore.

¹¹ O LORD, give strength to your people;
give them, O LORD, the blessings of peace.

SECOND READING: Acts 10:34-43

Peter crosses the sharp religious boundary separating Jews from Gentiles and proclaims the good news of God's inclusive forgiveness in Jesus' name to Cornelius, a Roman centurion. As a result of Peter's preaching, Cornelius and his family become the first Gentiles to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

³⁴ Peter began to speak to [Cornelius and his household]: “I truly understand that God shows no partiality,³⁵ but in every people anyone who fears him and practices righteousness is acceptable to him. ³⁶ You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. ³⁷ That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: ³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. ³⁹ We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree,⁴⁰ but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear,⁴¹ not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴² He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

GOSPEL: Matthew 3:13-17

Before Jesus begins his ministry, he is baptized by John, touched by the Spirit, and identified publicly as God's child.

¹³ Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. ¹⁴ John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” ¹⁵ But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now, for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented. ¹⁶ And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw God's Spirit descending like a dove and

alighting on him.¹⁷ And a voice from the heavens said, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”