

## Readings — December 6, 2015

### FIRST READING — Malachi 3:1-4

1See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. 2But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; 3he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. 4Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

### Gospel Canticle

Luke 1:68-79

(please pray responsively)

68Blessed are you, Lord, the | God of Israel,  
you have come to your people and | set them free.

**69You have raised up for us a | mighty Savior,  
born of the house of your | servant David.**

70Through your holy prophets, you promised of old to save us | from our enemies,  
71from the hands of | all who hate us,

**72to show mercy | to our forebears,  
and to remember your | holy covenant.**

73This was the oath you swore to our | father Abraham:

74to set us free from the hands of our | enemies,  
**free to worship you | without fear,**

**75holy and righteous before you, all the days | of our life.**

76And you, child, shall be called the prophet of | the Most High,  
for you will go before the Lord to pre- | pare the way,

**77to give God's people knowledge | of salvation  
by the forgiveness | of their sins.**

78In the tender compassion | of our God  
the dawn from on high shall | break upon us,

**79to shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shad- | ow of death,  
and to guide our feet into the | way of peace.**

### Gospel: Luke 3:1-18

1In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, 2during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. 3He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, 4as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight.

5Every valley shall be filled,  
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,  
and the crooked shall be made straight,  
and the rough ways made smooth;

6and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

7John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. 9Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

10And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" 11In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." 12Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" 13He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." 14Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

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."

18So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.