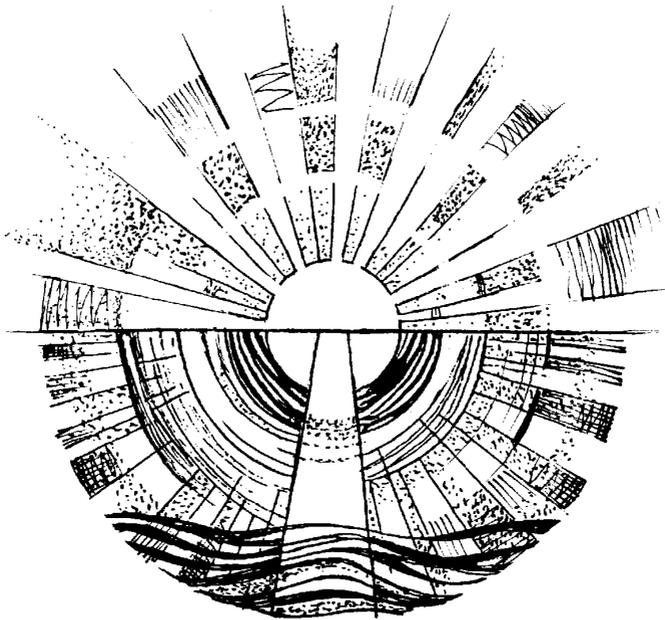


THE BIRTHDAY OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST



VESPERS

BENEDICTINE COMMUNITIES
TURVEY BEDFORDSHIRE

24th June

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BIRTHDAY OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

VESPERS

O God, come to our aid,
O Lord, make haste to help us.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now
and shall be for ever, amen. Alleluia!

HYMN

Charles Watson, O.S.B.

God called great pro - phets to fore - tell
The com - ing of his Son;
The great - est, called be - fore his birth,
Was John, the cho - sen one.

John searched in solitude for Christ
And knew him when he came.
He showed the world the Lamb of God
And hailed him in our name.

That lonely voice cried out the truth,
Derided and denied.
As witness to the law of God
His mighty martyr died.

We praise you, Trinity in One,
The light of unknown ways,
The hope of all who search for you,
Whose love fills all our days.

ANTIPHON 1: Elizabeth, * the wife of Zechariah, bore a great man, the herald of the Lord.

Psalm 72



How good God is to Israel,
to those who are pure of heart.
Yet my feet came close to stumbling,
my steps had almost slipped
for I was filled with envy of the proud
when I saw how the wicked prosper.

For them there are no pains;
their bodies are sound and sleek.
They have no share in men's sorrows;
they are not stricken like others.

So they wear their pride like a necklace,
they clothe themselves with violence.
Their hearts overflow with malice,
their minds seethe with plots.

They scoff; they speak with malice;
from on high they plan oppression.
They have set their mouths in the heavens
and their tongues dictate to the earth.

So the people turn to follow them
and drink in all their words.
They say: 'How can God know?
Does the Most High take any notice?'
Look at them, such are the wicked,
but untroubled, they grow in wealth.

How useless to keep my heart pure
and wash my hands in innocence,
when I was stricken all day long,
suffered punishment day after day.

Then I said: 'If I should speak like that,
I should betray the race of your sons.'

I strove to fathom this problem,
too hard for my mind to understand,
until I pierced the mysteries of God
and understood what becomes of the wicked.

How slippery the paths on which you set them;
You make them slide to destruction.
How suddenly they come to their ruin,
wiped out, destroyed by terrors.
Like a dream one wakes from, O Lord,
when you wake you dismiss them as phantoms.

And so when my heart grew embittered
and when I was cut to the quick,
I was stupid and did not understand,
no better than a beast in your sight.

Yet I was always in your presence;
you were holding me by my right hand.
You will guide me by your counsel
and so you will lead me to glory.

What else have I in heaven but you?
Apart from you I want nothing on earth.
My body and my heart faint for joy;
God is my possession for ever.

All those who abandon you shall perish;
you will destroy all those who are faithless.
To be near God is my happiness.
I have made the Lord God my refuge.
I will tell of all your works
at the gates of the city of Zion.

Glory be to the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit,
both now and for ever, amen.

ANTIPHON 1: Elizabeth, * the wife of Zechariah, bore a great man, the
herald of the Lord.

ANTIPHON 2: John * was born to a barren mother, for nothing is impossible
to God.

Psalm 138



(O Lord, you search me and you know me,
you know my resting and my rising,
you discern my purpose from afar.
You mark when I walk or lie down,
all my ways lie open to you.

(Before ever a word is on my tongue
(you know it, O Lord, through and through.
(Behind and before you besiege me,
(your hand ever laid upon me.
Too wonderful for me, this knowledge,
too high, beyond my reach.

O where can I go from your spirit,
or where can I flee from your face?
If I climb the heavens, you are there.
If I lie in the grave, you are there.

If I take the wings of the dawn
and dwell at the sea's furthest end,
even there your hand would lead me,
your right hand would hold me fast.

If I say: 'Let the darkness hide me
and the light around me be night,'
even darkness is not dark for you
and the night is as clear as the day.

For it was you who created my being,
knit me together in my mother's womb.
I thank you for the wonder of my being,
for the wonders of all your creation.

Already you knew my soul,
my body held no secret from you
when I was being fashioned in secret
and moulded in the depths of the earth.

Your eyes saw all my actions,
they were all of them written in your book;
every one of my days was decreed
before one of them came into being.

To me, how mysterious your thoughts,
the sum of them not to be numbered!
If I count them, they are more than the sand;
to finish, I must be eternal, like you.

O God, that you would slay the wicked!
Men of blood, keep far away from me!
With deceit they rebel against you
and set your designs at naught.

Do I not hate those who hate you,
abhor those who rise against you?
I hate them with a perfect hate
and they are foes to me.

O search me, God, and know my heart.
O test me and know my thoughts.
See that I follow not the wrong path
and lead me in the path of life eternal.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now
and shall be for ever, amen.

ANTIPHON 2: John * was born to a barren mother, for nothing is impossible
to God.

ANTIPHON 3: Among those * born of women, none is greater than John the
Baptist.

NT Canticle 6

(Romans 8:14–17)



Everyone moved by the Spirit
is a son of God.

You received, not the spirit of slaves,
to bring back fear into your lives

but the spirit of sons
which makes us cry out, 'Abba, Father!'

The Spirit bears witness with our spirit
that we are truly children of God.

And if we are children, then we are heirs:
heirs of God, who share in Christ's inheritance.
We share in his sufferings
that we may also come to share his glory.

Glory be to the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit,
both now and for ever, amen.

ANTIPHON 3: Among those * born of women, none is greater than John the
Baptist.

ANTIPHON 4: John * was a bright and shining lamp, and in his light we rejoice.

Psalm 115



I trusted, even when I said:
'I am sorely afflicted,'
and when I said in my alarm:
'No man can be trusted.'

How can I repay the Lord
for his goodness to me?
The cup of salvation I will raise;
I will call on the Lord's name.

My vows to the Lord I will fulfil
before all his people.
O precious in the eyes of the Lord
is the death of his faithful.

Your servant, Lord, your servant am I;
you have loosened my bonds.
A thanksgiving sacrifice I make:
I will call on the Lord's name.

My vows to the Lord I will fulfil
before all his people,
in the courts of the house of the Lord,
in your midst, O Jerusalem.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now
and shall be for ever, amen.

ANTIPHON 4: John * was a bright and shining lamp, and in his light we rejoice.

SCRIPTURE READING

RESPONSORY

Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight.
(repeat)

There is one coming after me who existed before me:

Make his paths straight.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight.

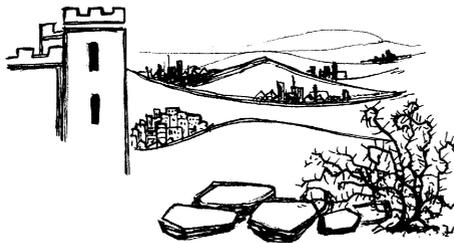
MAGNIFICAT ANTIPHONS

FIRST VESPERS

The angel Gabriel * appeared to Zechariah, standing on the right of the altar of incense.

SECOND VESPERS

Today * a child is born to us, greater than all the prophets: this is he whom the Saviour called greatest of those born of women.



MAGNIFICAT

Canticle of Mary

(Luke 1:46–55)



My soul magnifies the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my saviour;
so tenderly has he looked upon his servant,
humble as she is.

For from this day forth
all generations will count me blessed,
so wonderfully has he dealt with me,
the Lord, the mighty one.

His name is holy,
his mercy sure from generation to generation
toward those who fear him;
the deeds of his arm disclose his might.

The arrogant of heart and mind he has put to rout,
torn powers from their thrones but lifted up the humble.
The hungry he has satisfied with good things,
the rich sent empty away.

He has ranged himself on the side of Israel his servant,
firm in his promise to our fathers.
He has not forgotten to show mercy,
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now
and shall be for ever, amen.

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REPEAT ANTIPHON

INTERCESSIONS

OUR FATHER

(said by the Superior)

CONCLUDING PRAYER

LET US BLESS THE LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD

May the divine assistance remain always with us
And with our absent brothers and sisters. Amen.

