

December 21st – Cassandra Bigelow – Friday of the Third Week of Advent

Reading One: Reading 1 SG 2:8-14

"As Christmas day quickly approaches, the promises of the future spring forth. The birth of the Lord Jesus manifests in today's first reading by the imagery of the earth blooming:

"The rains are over and gone.

The flowers appear on the earth,
the time of pruning the vines has come,
and the song of the dove is heard in our land.
The fig tree puts forth its figs,
and the vines, in bloom, give forth fragrance.
Arise, my beloved, my beautiful one,
and come!"

The storms have passed and vegetation springs up from the land. Life blossoms in the joyful anticipation of our Lord Jesus. Let our hearts be joyful and spring up like the flowers of the earth, and let us bear good fruit for others. Let us listen to this invitation of the Lord, "Arise, my beloved, my beautiful one, and come!" As the birth of our lord draws near, let us open our hearts to the Lord like a blossoming flower and let His light shine upon us so that this Christmas season we can live fully and grow greatly!

Live today with joy and laughter as we await the joyful coming of Christmas day!"

Reading 1
SG 2:8-14

Hark! my lover—here he comes
springing across the mountains,
leaping across the hills.
My lover is like a gazelle
or a young stag.
Here he stands behind our wall,
gazing through the windows,
peering through the lattices.
My lover speaks; he says to me,
"Arise, my beloved, my dove, my beautiful one,
and come!
"For see, the winter is past,
the rains are over and gone.
The flowers appear on the earth,
the time of pruning the vines has come,
and the song of the dove is heard in our land.
The fig tree puts forth its figs,
and the vines, in bloom, give forth fragrance.

Arise, my beloved, my beautiful one,
and come!

"O my dove in the clefts of the rock,
in the secret recesses of the cliff,
Let me see you,
let me hear your voice,
For your voice is sweet,
and you are lovely."

Or ZEP 3:14-18A

Shout for joy, O daughter Zion!
Sing joyfully, O Israel!
Be glad and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!
The LORD has removed the judgment against you,
he has turned away your enemies;
The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst,
you have no further misfortune to fear.
On that day, it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Fear not, O Zion, be not discouraged!
The LORD, your God, is in your midst,
a mighty savior;
He will rejoice over you with gladness,
and renew you in his love,
He will sing joyfully because of you,
as one sings at festivals.

Responsorial Psalm PS 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21

R. (1a; 3a) Exult, you just, in the Lord! Sing to him a new song.
Give thanks to the LORD on the harp;
with the ten-stringed lyre chant his praises.
Sing to him a new song;
pluck the strings skillfully, with shouts of gladness.
R. Exult, you just, in the Lord! Sing to him a new song.
But the plan of the LORD stands forever;
the design of his heart, through all generations.
Blessed the nation whose God is the LORD,
the people he has chosen for his own inheritance.
R. Exult, you just, in the Lord! Sing to him a new song.
Our soul waits for the LORD,

who is our help and our shield,
For in him our hearts rejoice;
in his holy name we trust.
R. Exult, you just, in the Lord! Sing to him a new song.

Gospel
Luke 1:39-45

Mary set out in those days
and traveled to the hill country in haste
to a town of Judah,
where she entered the house of Zechariah
and greeted Elizabeth.
When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting,
the infant leaped in her womb,
and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit,
cried out in a loud voice and said,
"Most blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb.
And how does this happen to me,
that the mother of my Lord should come to me?
For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears,
the infant in my womb leaped for joy.
Blessed are you who believed
that what was spoken to you by the Lord
would be fulfilled."