

adornments in its new glory, this Christmas tree reflects the new beauty that God brought to earth when "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." By a tree the whole world has been redeemed, and therefore, with great joy we celebrate the glory of this tree.

SECOND READING:

One of the children reads:

From the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke:

At that time it came to pass that while Mary and Joseph were at Bethlehem, the days for her to be delivered were fulfilled. And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were shepherds in the same district living in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood by them and the glory of God shone about them and they feared exceedingly. And the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you news of great joy which shall be to all the people: for there has been born to you today in the town of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

All recite: Glory to God on high, and on earth peace to men whom God has chosen. We praise you. We bless you. We adore you. We glorify you. We worship you for your great glory. Lord God, heavenly king, God the Father all-powerful! Lord Jesus Christ, only-begotten Son! Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father! You that take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. You that take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. You that sit at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord. You alone are the Most High, O Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

PRAYER

Father: Christ is the tree of life.

All: In the midst of the paradise of delights.

Father: He is the tree.

All: We are the branches.

Father: In Him was life

All: And the life was the light of men.

Father: The Lord be with you.

All: And with you also.

Father: Let us pray: Bless, we beseech Thee, O Holy God, Father Almighty, this noble tree which we have adorned in honor of the new birth of Thy only-begotten Son, and do Thou so adorn our souls with the manifold beauties of Thy graces that being internally enlightened by the splendor radiating from this tree, we like the wisemen may come to adore Him who is eternal Light and Beauty, the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord.

All: Amen.

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Pamphlet 508

Blessing of a Christmas Crib for the Home

MARY'S MAGNIFICAT

The father of the family recites the antiphon, and then the Magnificat, alternating verses with the rest of the family.

Antiphon: The Lord has regarded humble persons and places, therefore all generations shall call them blessed.

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior:

Because he has regarded the lowliness of his handmaid; for behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed;

Because he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name:

And his mercy is from generation to generation, on those who fear him.

He has shown might with his arm, he has scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart.

He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and has exalted the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has given help to Israel, his servant, mindful of his mercy.

Even as he spoke to our fathers to Abraham and to his posterity forever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

FIRST READING

The mother of the family reads:

The eternal Son of God having become man out of love for us, chose to be born in a lowly stable, rather than in the greatest palace of kings. Being rich, He became poor for our sake to show us how greatly He loves poverty and humility. But the presence of the King of kings made this lowly shelter to be the most honorable and noble of royal palaces. Herein He was pleased to be, adored by His virgin mother and father, by the poor shepherds, and by the wealthy wise men. As a man among men Christ came for all men, of all times, and all places; unless we say "there is no room," He will come into our home this Christmas night, and will make it a place of splendor, of love and of great joy.

All answer: Thanks be to God

Mother: The Word was made flesh, Alleluia.

All: And dwells among us, Alleluia.

SECOND READING

One of the children reads:

From the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke:

At that time the shepherds were saying to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this event that has come to pass which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in the manger. And when they had seen, they understood what had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard marveled at the things told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept in mind all these words pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, even as it was spoken to them.

Each member of the family kisses the Gospel text.

PRAYER

Father: O Lord, hear my prayer.

All: And let my cry come unto Thee.

Father: The Lord be with you.

All: And with you also.

Father: O God, out of your love for us you sent your dearly beloved Son to become man You willed that he be born in a humble stable in order to give us an example of humility. We pray you now to bless this crib, a representation of the scene of his birth; may it draw us closer to him. By imitating his humility may we become a worthy dwelling place for his rebirth, Jesus Christ, thy Son our Lord.

All: Amen.

All sing, "O Come All Ye Faithful" or "Silent Night."

Blessing of a Christmas tree for the Home

The father of the family recites the antiphon. The psalm is then recited alternately with the rest of the family.

Antiphon: Let all the trees of the forest sing for joy, for the Lord has come.

Psalm 95: Sing to the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord, all the earth.

Sing to the Lord, bless His name
Proclaim His salvation day after day.

Declare His glory among the nations,
His wonders among all the peoples.

For great is the Lord, and highly to be praised,
to be feared above all the gods.

For all the gods of the heathen are vain idols;
but the Lord made the heavens.

Majesty and beauty are before Him:

Power and splendor are in His sanctuary.

Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,
ascribe to the Lord glory and power;
ascribe to the Lord the glory due to His name.

Offer sacrifice, and enter His courts.
Worship the Lord in holy attire.

Tremble before Him, all the earth.
Proclaim among the nations "the Lord is king."

He has established the world that is not moved;
He rules the people with equity.

Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad;
let the sea and all that it contains resound, let the
fields exult and all that is in them.

Then shall the trees of the forest rejoice before the
Lord, for He comes, for He comes to rule the earth.

He will rule the world with justice, And the peoples
according to His faithfulness.

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

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

The antiphon is repeated by all together:
Let all the trees of the forest sing for joy, for the Lord
has come.

FIRST READING

The mother of the family reads:

After the fall of our first parents the earth was bare
and desolate; the world stood in the darkness of sin.
But when the Savior was born our earth shone with a
new brightness; the glory of the Almighty had
renewed the world, making it more beautiful than
before. This tree once stood dark and empty in a cold
world. But now resplendent with lights and bright