

CHRISTMAS – Day

Year A, B, C

Reading 1

Citation: Isaiah, Chap. 52, verses 7-10
Isaiah 52:7-10

Isaiah is upbeat about the meaning of what God has shown him. It means the answer to the Israelites' longing is coming if only they are patient and willing to wait for it. There is wonder, amazement, and awe in Isaiah's voice which build almost to a crescendo at the end of the passage.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of him who brings glad tidings, (very short pause)
announcing peace, {A sort of List!}
bearing good news, { }
announcing salvation, { } (very short pause)
and saying to Zion,
“Your God is King!” (proud! confident!) (Pause)

Hark! (very short pause)
Your sentinels raise a cry, (very short pause)
together they shout for joy, (short pause)
for they see directly before their eyes, (ignore the comma) (amazement) (awe)
the LORD restoring Zion. (again – pride, confidence) (Pause)

Break out together in song, (be joyous!)
O ruins of Jerusalem!
For the LORD comforts his people, (somewhat serious – compassion)
he redeems Jerusalem. (Pause)

The LORD has bared his holy arm in the sight of all the nations; (short pause)
all the ends of the earth (building awe & amazement)
will behold the salvation of our God. (powerful, confident)

The Word of the Lord.

CHRISTMAS – Day

Year A, B, C

Reading 2

Citation: Hebrews, Chap. 1, verses 1-6
Hebrews 1:1-6

The passage summarizes Jewish history using the events of Jesus' coming as the linchpins. It is full of pride – God's pride of His Son and at what He did and still does. It's as though you are aware of that is going through God's mind as He contemplates the significance of Jesus' act of total obedience. Show that musing tone in your voice as it builds and responds to your sense of pride you'd feel, too.

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

Brothers and sisters:

(the Assembly is your flock)

In times past,

(short pause)

God spoke in partial and various ways to our ancestors
through the prophets;

(very short pause)

(Pause)

in these last days,

(very short pause)

he has spoken to us through the Son,

(very short pause)

whom he made heir of all things

(parenthetical expression)

and through whom he created the universe,

(almost a parenthetical expression)

who is the refulgence of his glory,

(some pride, here)

the very imprint of his being,

(more pride)

and who sustains all things by his mighty word.

(very proud!)

When he had accomplished purification from sins,

he took his seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

(pride continued)

as far superior to the angels

“ “

as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

“ “

For to which of the angels did God ever say:

(question in your voice)

You are my son; this day I have begotten you?

(a proud, factual statement)

Or again:

(question in your voice)

I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me?

(a proud factual statement)

And again, when he leads the firstborn into the world, he says:

(question in voice)

Let all the angels of God worship him.

(convinced! firm!)

The Word of the Lord.

CHRISTMAS – Day

Year A, B, C

GOSPEL
Longer Form

Citation: John, Chap. 1, Verses 1-18

John 1: 1-18

John is the most theological of the evangelists, yet he is also very poetic. This reading needs to be thoughtfully presented with enough time for the listener to “see” what John is getting at. God’s Son is present at the very beginning of existence and guides its, and our, development. In the form of Jesus He comes to show us how we, made in the image of God, are to behave in God’s creation. Those who see and understand this become fully human creatures of their Creator. Take your time; be a wonderer; savor the meaning of God’s Love in your life and the lives of your listeners.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God.

(very short pause)

All things came to be through him,
and without him nothing came to be.

(very short pause)

What came to be through him was life,
and this life was the light of the human race;
the light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not overcome it.

(short pause)

A man
named John
was sent from God.

(parenthetical)
(very short pause)

He came for testimony,
to testify to the light,
so that all might believe through him.

He was not the light,
but came to testify to the light.

The true light,
which enlightens everyone,
was coming into the world.

(voice up a bit)
(very short pause)

He was in the world,
and the world came to be through him,
but the world did not know him.

(sad tone) (very short pause)

He came to what was his own,
but his own people did not accept him.

(very short pause)

But

to those who did accept him
he gave power to become children of God,
to those who believe in his name,
who were born not by natural generation
nor by human choice
nor by a man's decision
but of God.

(very short pause)

And the Word became flesh
and made his dwelling among us,

and we saw his glory,
the glory as of the Father's only Son,
full of grace and truth.

(mounting wonder and awe)

(short pause)

John testified to him
and cried out, saying,
"This was he of whom I said,
'The one who is coming after me ranks ahead of me
because he existed before me.'"

(raise volume a bit)

From his fullness we have all received, grace in place of grace,
because
while the law was given through Moses,
grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

(disregard first comma)

(almost parenthetical)
(very short pause)

No one has ever seen God.
The only Son,
God,
who is at the Father's side,
has revealed him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

CHRISTMAS – Day

Year A-B-C

GOSPEL
Shorter Form

Citation: John, Chap. 1, Verses 1-18
John 1: 1-5, 9-14

See NOTES for Longer Form.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.

(take your time)
(the remainder is awesome!)

He was in the beginning with God.

(very short pause)

All things came to be through him,
and without him nothing came to be.

(very short pause)

What came to be through him was life,
and this life was the light of the human race;

the light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not overcome it.

The true light,
which enlightens everyone,
was coming into the world.

(almost parenthetical)
(very short pause)

He was in the world,
and the world came to be through him,
but the world did not know him.

(slow, sad)

He came to what was his own,
but his own people did not accept him.

(sad)

But to those who did accept him
he gave power to become children of God,
to those who believe in his name,
who were born not by natural generation
nor by human choice
nor by a man's decision
but of God.

(very short pause)

And the Word became flesh
and made his dwelling among us,
and we saw his glory,
the glory as of the Father's only Son,
full of grace and truth.

(let awe & wonder build)

“ “
“ “
“ “
“ “

The Gospel of the Lord.