

THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY: VIGIL

LECTIONARY #621

READING I 1 Chronicles 15:3-4, 15-16; 16:1-2

A reading from the first Book of Chronicles

David assembled all Israel in Jerusalem to bring the ark of the LORD

to the place that he had prepared for it.

David also called together the sons of Aaron and the Levites.

The Levites bore the ark of God on their shoulders with poles, as Moses had ordained according to the word of the LORD.

David commanded the chiefs of the Levites

to appoint their kinsmen as **chanters**,

to play on musical instruments, harps, lyres, and cymbals, to make a loud sound of **rejoicing**.

They brought in the ark of God and set it within the tent

which David had pitched for it.

Then they offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings to God. When David had finished offering up the burnt offerings and

peace offerings,

he blessed the people in the name of the LORD.

Chronicles = KRAH-nih-k*is
Announce the book's name clearly;
it is not often heard from.

The mention of instruments and song
creates a sense of joyous cacophony.
Read with a countenance of joy.

We leave the sense of hearing and move
to the senses of smell and sight: Envision
incense and smoke rising. The ark is a
symbol of God's revelation to human beings,
and David's lavish ceremony is a sign of
thanksgiving to God.

READING I

Scripture recalls how God prepared the people to per-

ceive the Lord's handiwork in Mary by first entrusting to them the ark of the Lord. This relatively small but elaborate container

housed the tablets of the Ten Commandments, which are also called the decalogue or "ten words" of God. Accordingly, the ark

was the first house of the Lord's word. Chronicles recounts the pomp and pageantry that surrounds the ark when David

restored it its proper place in the meeting tent in Jerusalem after it had been taken by Philistines. (This event happens prior to

life the people.

As we celebrate Mary in this liturgy,

we give her high praise, for she is a new ark. She is one in whom God has done great things. Yet, as a new ark, her contents differ

slightly. She carries the *eternal* Word of God, Jesus Christ. Accordingly, since her

contents cannot pass away, neither can she. So today we celebrate the new ark's assumption into eternity for it is fitting that

READING II

In this reading, to the Corinthians closes, Paul

confronts the topic of death with the hope of resurrection. For the apostle, to abide in Christ Jesus is to experience the hope of

resurrection, and that hope has bearing on this present life as we face its joys and

challenges. Using imagery of clothing (which recalls baptism), Paul explains that we know ourselves to be embodied beings and

she who bore the eternal Word should herself receive the first fruits of the promised resurrection.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 132:6-7, 9-10, 13-14 (8)

R. Lord, go up to the place of your rest, you and the ark of your holiness.
Behold, we heard of it in Ephrathah;
we found it in the fields of Jaar.
Let us enter into his dwelling,
let us worship at his footstool.
May your priests be clothed with justice;
let your faithful ones shout merrily
for joy.
For the sake of David your servant,
reject not the plea of your anointed.
For the LORD has chosen Zion;
he prefers her for his dwelling.
"Zion is my resting place forever;
in her will I dwell, for I prefer her."

For meditation and context:

READING II 1 Corinthians 15:54b-57

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians
Brothers and sisters:
When that which is mortal clothes itself with immortality,
then the word that is written shall come about:
Death is swallowed up in victory.
Where, O death, is your victory?
Where, O death, is your sting?
The sting of death is sin,
and the power of sin is the law.
But thanks be to God who gives us the victory
through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Corinthians = kohr-IN-thee-uhnz

GOSPEL Luke 11:27-28

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke
While Jesus was speaking,
a woman from the crowd called out and said to him,
"Blessed is the womb that carried you
and the breasts at which you nursed."
He replied,
"Rather, blessed are those
who hear the word of God and observe it."

Emphasize "written" so that the assembly
understands Paul is quoting lines from
Hosea. Familiarize yourself with the quoted
lines so that you can deliver the hypothetical
and ironic questions looking out at the
assembly. Paul quotes Hosea with
confidence.
Conclude with an upbeat and excited tone
of praise.

This short reading is the crux of today's
feast. Make sure the assembly is ready
before you begin to read.

Who better than Mary exemplifies a person
of faith who completely and fully hears and
responds to the word of God?

GOSPEL

In a brief exchange between Jesus and a nameless woman in a crowd, Luke captures the twofold nature of Mary that we celebrate in all others, hears the word of God and acts upon it. Because of Mary's attentive ears and observant will, the Lord will bless her with more than the grace of being the vehicle of his incarnation. Assumed into heaven, Mary becomes the first to follow her son into the promise of resurrection glory where she is both mother of the Word incarnate and observant listener of God's Word. E.W.

thus mortal. Yet, in Christ, we have been clothed anew with immortality. Once clothed in Christ's immortality through baptism, the promise of a share in his resurrection becomes ours. With that promise, death's potential victory or sting, death's power, meets its end. On this solemnity of Mary's assumption, we celebrate with great assurance that hope in the resurrection is not in vain, for Christ has begun to share it with those who abide in him, beginning with his mother.

Jesus amplifies the woman's claim. More brought up into heaven. At the same time, blessedness of this body, which God incarnate and observant listener of God's