

Reading for The nativity of St John the Baptist 24th June

Reading 1, *Isaiah 49:1-6*

¹ Coasts and islands, listen to me, pay attention, distant peoples. Yahweh called me when I was in the womb, before my birth he had pronounced my name. ² He made my mouth like a sharp sword, he hid me in the shadow of his hand. He made me into a sharpened arrow and concealed me in his quiver. ³ He said to me, 'Israel, you are my servant, through whom I shall manifest my glory.' ⁴ But I said, 'My toil has been futile, I have exhausted myself for nothing, to no purpose.' Yet all the while my cause was with Yahweh and my reward with my God. ⁵ And now Yahweh has spoken, who formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him and to re-unite Israel to him; -I shall be honoured in Yahweh's eyes, and my God has been my strength. ⁶ He said, 'It is not enough for you to be my servant, to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back the survivors of Israel; I shall make you a light to the nations so that my salvation may reach the remotest parts of earth.'

Responsorial Psalm, *Psalms 139:1-3, 13-14, 14-15*

¹ [For the choirmaster Of David Psalm] Yahweh, you examine me and know me, ² you know when I sit, when I rise, you understand my thoughts from afar. ³ You watch when I walk or lie down, you know every detail of my conduct.

¹³ You created my inmost self, knit me together in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ For so many marvels I thank you; a wonder am I, and all your works are wonders. You knew me through and through,

¹⁵ my being held no secrets from you, when I was being formed in secret, textured in the depths of the earth.

Reading 2, Acts 13:22-26

²² he deposed him and raised up David to be king, whom he attested in these words, "I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart, who will perform my entire will." ²³ To keep his promise, God has raised up for Israel one of David's descendants, Jesus, as Saviour, ²⁴ whose coming was heralded by John when he proclaimed a baptism of repentance for the whole people of Israel. ²⁵ Before John ended his course he said, "I am not the one you imagine me to be; there is someone coming after me whose sandal I am not fit to undo." ²⁶ 'My brothers, sons of Abraham's race, and all you godfearers, this message of salvation is meant for you.

Gospel, Luke 1:57-66, 80

⁵⁷ The time came for Elizabeth to have her child, and she gave birth to a son; ⁵⁸ and when her neighbours and relations heard that the Lord had lavished on her his faithful love, they shared her joy. ⁵⁹ Now it happened that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; they were going to call him Zechariah after his father, ⁶⁰ but his mother spoke up. 'No,' she said, 'he is to be called John.' ⁶¹ They said to her, 'But no one in your family has that name,' ⁶² and made signs to his father to find out what he wanted him called. ⁶³ The father asked for a writing-tablet and wrote, 'His name is John.' And they were all astonished. ⁶⁴ At that instant his power of speech returned and he spoke and praised God. ⁶⁵ All their neighbours were filled with awe and the whole affair was talked about throughout the hill country of Judaea. ⁶⁶ All those who heard of it treasured it in their hearts. 'What will this child turn out to be?' they wondered. And indeed the hand of the Lord was with him. ⁸⁰ Meanwhile

the child grew up and his spirit grew strong. And he lived in the desert until the day he appeared openly to Israel.