

Feast of the Ever-Blessed Virgin Mary

Judith 13:18-20; Canticle 15, the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55); Revelation 21:1-7; Luke 1:26-38
A Women's Lectionary for the Whole Church, by Wil Gafney

Judith 13:18-20

18 Uzziah said to Judith, "O daughter, you are blessed by the Most High God above all other women on earth, and blessed be the Holy God, who created the heavens and the earth, who has guided you to cut off the head of the leader of our enemies. **19** Praise of you will never depart from the hearts of women and men who remember the power of God. **20** May God do these things for you as an eternal exaltation, and may God visit you with blessings, because you did not withhold your life when our nation was humiliated, rather you rallied against our demise, walking straight before our God." And all the people said, "Amen. Amen."

the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55)

46 "My soul magnifies the Holy One,

47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

48 for God has looked with favor on the lowliness of God's own womb-slave.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is God's name.

50 God's loving-kindness is for those who fear God
from generation to generation.

51 God has shown the strength of God's own arm;
God has scattered the arrogant in the intent of their hearts.

52 God has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;

53 God has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.

54 God has helped God's own child, Israel,
A memorial to God's mercy,

55 just as God said to our mothers and fathers,
to (Hagar and] Sarah and Abraham, to their descendants forever."

Revelation 21:1-7

1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. **2** And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, descending heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. **3** And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

'Look! The home of God is among the woman-born.
God will dwell with them as their God;
they will be God's peoples,
and selfsame God will be with them;

4 God will wipe every tear from their eyes.
Death will be no more;
grief and weeping and pain will be no more,
for the first things have passed away."

5 And the one who was seated upon the throne said, "Look!, I am making all things new." The One also he said, "Write, for these words are trustworthy and true." **6** Then the One said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the thirsty from the spring of the water of life freely. **7** Those who overcome will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my daughters and sons.

Luke 1:26-38

26 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee, Nazareth, 27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the name of the virgin was Mary. 28 And the angel came to Mary and said, "Rejoice, favored one! The Most High God is with you." 29 Now, she was troubled by the angel's words and pondered what sort of greeting this was. 30 Then the angel said to her, "Fear not Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And now, you will conceive in your womb and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Sovereign God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. 33 He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his sovereignty there will be no end." 34 Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have not known a man intimately?" 35 The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit, She will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the one born will be holy. He will be called the Son of God. 36 And now, Elizabeth your kinswoman has even conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for she who was called barren. 37 For nothing will be impossible with God." 38 Then Mary said, "Here am I, the woman-slave of God; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel left her.