The Nativity of the Lord

Second Reading

Rom a Ser-mon by Saint Le-o the Great, Pope.

Dear-ly be-lov-ed, to-day our Sav-ior is born let us re-joice.

Sadness should have no place on the birthday of life. The fear of death has been swallowed up; life brings us joy with the promise of eternal happiness. No one is shut out from this joy; all share the same reason for rejoicing. Our Lord, victorious over sin and death, finding no man free from sin, came to free us all. Let the saint rejoice as he sees the palm of victory at hand. Let the sinner be glad as he receives

At Vigils. Second Reading

the offer of forgiveness. Let the pagan take courage as he is summoned to life. In the fullness of time, chosen in the un-fathom-able depths of God’s wisdom, the Son of God took for himself our common hu-man-i-ty in order to re-con-cile with its cre-a-tor. He came to o- verthrow the dev-il, the o-ri-gin of death, in that ver-y na-ture by which he had o-ver-thrown man-kind. And so at the birth of our Lord the an-gels sing in joy: Glo-ry to God in the highest, and they proclaim peace to his people on earth as they see the heav-en-ly Je-ru-sa-lem be-ing built from all the nations of the world. When
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the an-gels on high are so ex-ult-ant at this mar-ve-lous work of

God’s goodness, what joy should it not bring to the low-ly hearts

of men? Belov-ed, let us give thanks to God the Father, through

his Son, in the Ho-ly Spir-it, because in his great love for us

he took pit-y on us, and when we were dead in our sins he

brought us to life with Christ, so that in him we might be a new

cre- a- tion.

Tone for the Second Reading of Christmas Vigils taken from a manuscript of the monastery of Maria Einsiedeln, as given in Laudes Festivae: Lectionarium et Cantu-arium pro Diversitate Temporum et Festum, edited by P. Beatus Reiser, O.S.B., Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1932. Cantillation of the English text arranged by Fr. Samuel F. Weber, O.S.B., Copyright © 2009 Saint Meinrad Archabbey, St. Meinrad, IN 47577-1010 U.S.A. All rights reserved.