**FIRST READING** Genesis 12: 1-4a

A reading from the book of Genesis

The Lord said to Abram, “Leave your country, your relatives, and your father's home, and go to a land that I am going to show you. I will give you many descendants, and they will become a great nation. I will bless you and make your name famous, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, But I will curse those who curse you. And through you I will bless all the nations.” When Abram was seventy-five years old, he started out from Haran, as the Lord had told him to do; and Lot went with him. Abram took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, and all the wealth and all the slaves they had acquired in Haran, and they started out for the land of Canaan.

**Psalm 121**

**R My help comes from the Lord,**

I look to the mountains where will my help come from? My help will come from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. **R**

He will not let you fall; your protector is always awake. The protector of Israel never dozes or sleeps. **R**

The Lord will guard you; he is by your side to protect you. The sun will not hurt you during the day, nor the moon during the night. **R**

The Lord will protect you from all danger; he will keep you safe. He will protect you as you come and go now and forever. **R**

**SECOND READING** Romans 4: 1-5, 13-17

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans

What shall we say, then, of Abraham, the father of our race? What was his experience? If he was put right with God by the things he did, he would have something to boast about—but not in God's sight. The scripture says, “Abraham believed God, and because of his faith God accepted him as righteous.” A person who works is paid wages, but they are not regarded as a gift; they are something that has been earned. But those who depend on faith, not on deeds, and who believe in the God who declares the guilty to be innocent, it is this faith that God takes into account in order to put them right with himself. When God promised Abraham and his descendants that the world would belong to him, he did so, not because Abraham obeyed the Law, but because he believed and was accepted as righteous by God. For if what God promises is to be given to those who obey the Law, then faith means nothing and God's promise is worthless. The Law brings down God's anger; but where there is no law, there is no disobeying of the law. And so the promise was based on faith, in order that the promise should be guaranteed as God's free gift to all of Abraham's descendants—not just to those who obey the Law, but also to those who believe as Abraham did. For Abraham is the spiritual father of us all; as the scripture says, “I have made you father of many nations.” So the promise is good in the sight of God, in whom Abraham believed—the God who brings the dead to life and whose command brings into being what did not exist.

**GOSPEL** John 3:1-17

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

**Glory to you O Lord.**

There was a Jewish leader named Nicodemus, who belonged to the party of the Pharisees. One night he went to Jesus and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher sent by God. No one could perform the miracles you are doing unless God were with him.” Jesus answered, “I am telling you the truth: no one can see the Kingdom of God without being born again.” “How can a grown man be born again?” Nicodemus asked. “He certainly cannot enter his mother's womb and be born a second time!” “I am telling you the truth,” replied Jesus, “that no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. A person is born physically of human parents, but is born spiritually of the Spirit. Do not be surprised because I tell you that you must all be born again. The wind blows wherever it wishes; you hear the sound it makes, but you do not know where it comes from or where it is going. It is like that with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” “How can this be?” asked Nicodemus. Jesus answered, “You are a great teacher in Israel, and you don't know this? I am telling you the truth: we speak of what we know and report what we have seen, yet none of you is willing to accept our message. You do not believe me when I tell you about the things of this world; how will you ever believe me, then, when I tell you about the things of heaven? And no one has ever gone up to heaven except the Son of Man, who came down from heaven.” As Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the desert, in the same way the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to be its judge, but to be its saviour.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**