

## Monday – 3<sup>rd</sup> Week of Advent B

### **First Reading: Numbers 24: 2-7, 15-17**

Raising his eyes Balaam saw Israel, encamped by tribes; the spirit of God came on him and he declaimed his poem. He said:

‘The oracle of Balaam son of Beor,  
the oracle of the man with far-seeing eyes,  
the oracle of one who hears the word of God.  
He sees what Shaddai makes him see,  
receives the divine answer, and his eyes are opened.  
How fair are your tents, O Jacob!  
How fair your dwellings, Israel!  
Like valleys that stretch afar,  
like gardens by the banks of a river,  
like aloes planted by the Lord,  
like cedars beside the waters!  
A hero arises from their stock,  
he reigns over countless peoples.  
His king is greater than Agag,  
his majesty is exalted.’

Then Balaam declaimed his poem again. He said:

‘The oracle of Balaam son of Beor,  
the oracle of the man with far-seeing eyes,  
the oracle of one who hears the word of God,  
of one who knows the knowledge of the Most High.  
He sees what Shaddai makes him see,  
receives the divine answer, and his eyes are opened.  
I see him – but not in the present,  
I behold him – but not close at hand:  
a star from Jacob takes the leadership,  
a sceptre arises from Israel.’

**Psalm 24(25):4-6,7a-9**

*Lord, make me know your ways.*

Lord, make me know your ways.  
Lord, teach me your paths.  
Make me walk in your truth, and teach me:  
for you are God my saviour.

*Lord, make me know your ways.*

In you I hope all day long  
because of your goodness, O Lord.  
Remember your mercy, Lord,  
and the love you have shown from of old.  
Do not remember the sins of my youth.  
In your love remember me.

*Lord, make me know your ways.*

The Lord is good and upright.  
He shows the path to those who stray,  
He guides the humble in the right path,  
He teaches his way to the poor.

*Lord, make me know your ways.*

**Gospel: Matthew 21:23-27**

Jesus had gone into the Temple and was teaching, when the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him and said, 'What authority have you for acting like this? And who gave you this authority?' 'And I' replied Jesus 'will ask you a question, only one; if you tell me the answer to it, I will then tell you my authority for acting like this. John's baptism: where did it come from: heaven or man?' And they argued it out this way among themselves, 'If we say from heaven, he will retort, "Then why did you refuse to believe him?"; but if we say from man, we have the people to fear, for they all hold that John was a prophet.' So their reply to Jesus was, 'We do not know.' And he retorted, 'Nor will I tell you my authority for acting like this.'