

Week of December 4, 2011

SUNDAY

READING 1 IS 40:1-5, 9-11

Comfort, give comfort to my people, says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her service is at an end, her guilt is expiated; indeed, she has received from the hand of the LORD double for all her sins.

A voice cries out: In the desert prepare the way of the LORD!
Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God! Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill shall be made low; the rugged land shall be made a plain, the rough country, a broad valley. Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Go up on to a high mountain, Zion, herald of glad tidings;
cry out at the top of your voice, Jerusalem, herald of good news!
Fear not to cry out and say to the cities of Judah: Here is your God!
Here comes with power the Lord GOD, who rules by his strong arm;
here is his reward with him, his recompense before him.
Like a shepherd he feeds his flock; in his arms he gathers the lambs, carrying them in his bosom, and leading the ewes with care.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM PS 85:9-10-11-12, 13-14

R. (8) Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

I will hear what God proclaims;
the LORD--for he proclaims peace to his people.
Near indeed is his salvation to those who fear him,
glory dwelling in our land.

R. Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

Kindness and truth shall meet;
justice and peace shall kiss.
Truth shall spring out of the earth,
and justice shall look down from heaven.

R. Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

The LORD himself will give his benefits;
our land shall yield its increase.

Justice shall walk before him,
and prepare the way of his steps.

R. Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

READING 2 2 PT 3:8-14

Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day. The Lord does not delay his promise, as some regard "delay," but he is patient with you, not wishing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a mighty roar and the elements will be dissolved by fire, and the earth and everything done on it will be found out.

Since everything is to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be, conducting yourselves in holiness and devotion, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved in flames and the elements melted by fire. But according to his promise we await new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, since you await these things, be eager to be found without spot or blemish before him, at peace.

GOSPEL MK 1:1-8

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God.
As it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way. A voice of one crying out in the desert: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths."

John the Baptist appeared in the desert proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. People of the whole Judean countryside and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they acknowledged their sins. John was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around

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his waist. He fed on locusts and wild honey. And this is what he proclaimed: "One mightier than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

MONDAY

READING 1 IS 35:1-10

The desert and the parched land will exult; the steppe will rejoice and bloom. They will bloom with abundant flowers, and rejoice with joyful song. The glory of Lebanon will be given to them, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon; They will see the glory of the LORD, the splendor of our God.

Strengthen the hands that are feeble, make firm the knees that are weak, Say to those whose hearts are frightened: Be strong, fear not! Here is your God, he comes with vindication; With divine recompense he comes to save you. Then will the eyes of the blind be opened, the ears of the deaf be cleared; Then will the lame leap like a stag, then the tongue of the mute will sing.

Streams will burst forth in the desert, and rivers in the steppe. The burning sands will become pools, and the thirsty ground, springs of water; The abode where jackals lurk will be a marsh for the reed and papyrus. A highway will be there, called the holy way; No one unclean may pass over it, nor fools go astray on it. No lion will be there, nor beast of prey go up to be met upon it. It is for those with a journey to make, and on it the redeemed will walk. Those whom the LORD has ransomed will return and enter Zion singing, crowned with everlasting joy; They will meet with joy and gladness, sorrow and mourning will flee.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM PS 85:9AB AND 10, 11-12, 13-14

R. (Isaiah 35:4f) **Our God will come to save us!**

I will hear what God proclaims;
the LORD --for he proclaims peace to his people.

Near indeed is his salvation to those who fear him,
glory dwelling in our land.

R. **Our God will come to save us!**

Kindness and truth shall meet;
justice and peace shall kiss.

Truth shall spring out of the earth,
and justice shall look down from heaven.

R. **Our God will come to save us!**

The LORD himself will give his benefits;
our land shall yield its increase.

Justice shall walk before him,
and salvation, along the way of his steps.

R. **Our God will come to save us!**

GOSPEL LK 5:17-26

One day as Jesus was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem, were sitting there, and the power of the Lord was with him for healing. And some men brought on a stretcher a man who was paralyzed; they were trying to bring him in and set him in his presence. But not finding a way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on the stretcher through the tiles into the middle in front of Jesus. When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "As for you, your sins are forgiven."

Then the scribes and Pharisees began to ask themselves, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who but God alone can forgive sins?" Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them in reply, "What are you thinking in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk?' But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins?" he said to the one who was paralyzed, "I say to you, rise, pick up your stretcher, and go home."

He stood up immediately before them, picked up what he had been lying on, and went home, glorifying God. Then astonishment seized them all and they glorified God, and, struck with awe, they said, "We have seen incredible things today."

TUESDAY

READING 1 IS 40:1-11

Comfort, give comfort to my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her service is at an end, her guilt is expiated; Indeed, she has received from the hand of the LORD double for all her sins.

A voice cries out: In the desert prepare the way of the LORD! Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God! Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill shall be made low; The rugged land shall be made a plain, the rough country, a broad valley. Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

A voice says, "Cry out!" I answer, "What shall I cry out?" "All flesh is grass, and all their glory like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower wilts, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it. So then, the people is the grass. Though the grass withers and the flower wilts, the word of our God stands forever."

Go up onto a high mountain, Zion, herald of glad tidings; Cry out at the top of your voice, Jerusalem, herald of good news! Fear not to cry out and say to the cities of Judah: Here is your God! Here comes with power the Lord GOD, who rules by his strong arm; Here is his reward with him, his recompense before him. Like a shepherd he feeds his flock; in his arms he gathers the lambs, Carrying them in his bosom, and leading the ewes with care.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM PS 96:1-2, 3 AND 10AC, 11-12, 13

R. (see Isaiah 40:10ab) **The Lord our God comes with power.**
Sing to the LORD a new song;
sing to the LORD, all you lands.

Sing to the LORD; bless his name;
announce his salvation, day after day.
R. **The Lord our God comes with power.**

Tell his glory among the nations;
among all peoples, his wondrous deeds.
Say among the nations: The LORD is king;
he governs the peoples with equity.

R. **The Lord our God comes with power.**
Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice;
let the sea and what fills it resound;
let the plains be joyful and all that is in them!
Then let all the trees of the forest rejoice.

R. **The Lord our God comes with power.**
They shall exult before the LORD, for he comes;
for he comes to rule the earth.
He shall rule the world with justice
and the peoples with his constancy.

R. **The Lord our God comes with power.**

GOSPEL MT 18:12-14

Jesus said to his disciples: "What is your opinion? If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them goes astray, will he not leave the ninety-nine in the hills and go in search of the stray? And if he finds it, amen, I say to you, he rejoices more over it than over the ninety-nine that did not stray. In just the same way, it is not the will of your heavenly Father that one of these little ones be lost."

WEDNESDAY

READING 1 IS 40:25-31

To whom can you liken me as an equal? says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high and see who has created these things: He leads out their army and numbers them, calling them all by name. By his great might and the strength of his power not one of them is missing! Why, O Jacob, do you say, and declare, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD, and my right is disregarded by my God?"

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Do you not know or have you not heard? The LORD is the eternal God, creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint nor grow weary, and his knowledge is beyond scrutiny. He gives strength to the fainting; for the weak he makes vigor abound. Though young men faint and grow weary, and youths stagger and fall, They that hope in the LORD will renew their strength, they will soar as with eagles' wings; They will run and not grow weary, walk and not grow faint.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM PS 103:1-2, 3-4, 8 AND 10

R. (1) O bless the Lord, my soul!

Bless the LORD, O my soul;
and all my being, bless his holy name.

Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits.

R. O bless the Lord, my soul!

He pardons all your iniquities,
he heals all your ills.

He redeems your life from destruction,
he crowns you with kindness and compassion.

R. O bless the Lord, my soul!

Merciful and gracious is the LORD,
slow to anger and abounding in kindness.

Not according to our sins does he deal with us,
nor does he requite us according to our crimes.

R. O bless the Lord, my soul!

GOSPEL MT 11:28-30

Jesus said to the crowds: "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light."

THURSDAY

READING 1 GN 3:9-15, 20

After the man, Adam, had eaten of the tree, the LORD God called to the man and asked him, "Where are you?" He answered, "I heard you in the garden; but I was afraid,

because I was naked, so I hid myself." Then he asked, "Who told you that you were naked? You have eaten, then, from the tree of which I had forbidden you to eat!" The man replied, "The woman whom you put here with me she gave me fruit from the tree, and so I ate it." The LORD God then asked the woman, "Why did you do such a thing?" The woman answered, "The serpent tricked me into it, so I ate it."

Then the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, you shall be banned from all the animals and from all the wild creatures; on your belly shall you crawl, and dirt shall you eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike at your head, while you strike at his heel."

The man called his wife Eve, because she became the mother of all the living.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM PS 98:1, 2-3AB, 3CD-4

R. (1) Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous deeds.

Sing to the LORD a new song,
for he has done wondrous deeds;
His right hand has won victory for him,
his holy arm.

R. Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous deeds.

The LORD has made his salvation known:
in the sight of the nations he has revealed his justice.
He has remembered his kindness and his faithfulness
toward the house of Israel.

R. Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous deeds.

All the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation by our God.
Sing joyfully to the LORD, all you lands;
break into song; sing praise.

R. Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous deeds.

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READING 2 EPH 1:3-6, 11-12

Brothers and sisters: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens, as he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and without blemish before him. In love he destined us for adoption to himself through Jesus Christ, in accord with the favor of his will, for the praise of the glory of his grace that he granted us in the beloved.

In him we were also chosen, destined in accord with the purpose of the One who accomplishes all things according to the intention of his will, so that we might exist for the praise of his glory, we who first hoped in Christ.

GOSPEL LK 1:26-38

The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his Kingdom there will be no end." But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God." Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

FRIDAY

READING 1 IS 48:17-19

Thus says the LORD, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I, the LORD, your God, teach you what is for your good, and lead you on the way you should go. If you would hearken to my commandments, your prosperity would be like a river, and your vindication like the waves of the sea; Your descendants would be like the sand, and those born of your stock like its grains, Their name never cut off or blotted out from my presence.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM PS 1:1-2, 3, 4 AND 6

R. (see John 8:12) **Those who follow you, Lord, will have the light of life.**

Blessed the man who follows not
the counsel of the wicked
Nor walks in the way of sinners,
nor sits in the company of the insolent,
But delights in the law of the LORD
and meditates on his law day and night.

R. **Those who follow you, Lord, will have the light of life.**

He is like a tree
planted near running water,
That yields its fruit in due season,
and whose leaves never fade.
Whatever he does, prospers.

R. **Those who follow you, Lord, will have the light of life.**

Not so the wicked, not so;
they are like chaff which the wind drives away.
For the LORD watches over the way of the just,
but the way of the wicked vanishes.

R. **Those who follow you, Lord, will have the light of life.**

GOSPEL MT 11:16-19

Jesus said to the crowds: "To what shall I compare this generation? It is like children who sit in marketplaces and call to one another, "We played the flute for you, but you did not dance, we sang a dirge but you did not mourn." For John

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came neither eating nor drinking, and they said, "He is possessed by a demon." The Son of Man came eating and drinking and they said, "Look, he is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners." But wisdom is vindicated by her works."

SATURDAY

READING 1 SIR 48:1-4, 9-11

In those days, like a fire there appeared the prophet Elijah whose words were as a flaming furnace. Their staff of bread he shattered, in his zeal he reduced them to straits; By the Lord's word he shut up the heavens and three times brought down fire. How awesome are you, Elijah, in your wondrous deeds! Whose glory is equal to yours? You were taken aloft in a whirlwind of fire, in a chariot with fiery horses. You were destined, it is written, in time to come to put an end to wrath before the day of the LORD, To turn back the hearts of fathers toward their sons, and to re-establish the tribes of Jacob. Blessed is he who shall have seen you and who falls asleep in your friendship.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM PS 80:2AC AND 3B, 15-16, 18-19

R. (4) Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.

O shepherd of Israel, hearken,

From your throne upon the cherubim, shine forth.

Rouse your power.

R. Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.

Once again, O LORD of hosts,

look down from heaven, and see;

Take care of this vine,

and protect what your right hand has planted

the son of man whom you yourself made strong.

R. Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.

May your help be with the man of your right hand,

with the son of man whom you yourself made strong.

Then we will no more withdraw from you;

give us new life, and we will call upon your name.

R. Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.

GOSPEL MT 17:9A, 10-13

As they were coming down from the mountain, the disciples asked Jesus, "Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" He said in reply, "Elijah will indeed come and restore all things; but I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him but did to him whatever they pleased. So also will the Son of Man suffer at their hands."

Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist.
