

Sunday Readings

30 NOVEMBER 2025

Collect

Grant your faithful, we pray, almighty God,
the resolve to run forth to meet your Christ
with righteous deeds at his coming,
so that, gathered at his right hand,
they may be worthy to possess the heavenly
kingdom. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your
Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of
the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Isaiah 2:1-5

The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning
Judah and Jerusalem.

It shall come to pass in the latter days
that the mountain of the house of the LORD
shall be established as the highest of the
mountains,

and shall be lifted up above the hills;
and all the nations shall flow to it,
and many peoples shall come, and say:

‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
to the house of the God of Jacob,
that he may teach us his ways
and that we may walk in his paths.’
For out of Sion shall go forth the law,
and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
He shall judge between the nations,
and shall decide disputes for many peoples;
and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares,
and their spears into pruning-hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more.

O house of Jacob,
come, let us walk
in the light of the LORD.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 121:1-2.4-5.6-9. R/. cf. v.1

***R/. I rejoiced when I heard them say:
‘Let us go to God’s house.’***

I rejoiced when I heard them say:
‘Let us go to God’s house.’
And now our feet are standing
within your gates, O Jerusalem. ***R/.***

It is there that the tribes go up,
the tribes of the Lord.

For Israel’s law it is,
there to praise the Lord’s name.

There were set the thrones of judgement
of the house of David. ***R/.***

For the peace of Jerusalem pray:
‘Peace be to your homes!

May peace reign in your walls,
in your palaces, peace!’ ***R/.***

For love of my brethren and friends

I say: ‘Peace upon you!’

For love of the house of the Lord

I will ask for your good. ***R/.***

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans
13:11-14

Brothers and sisters: You know the time, that the hour
has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is
nearer to us now than when we first believed. The
night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us
cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour
of light. Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in
orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and
sensuality, not in quarrelling and jealousy. But put
on the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Psalm 85(84):8

Alleluia, alleluia.

Show us, O LORD, your mercy,
and grant us your salvation.

Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Matthew 24:37-44

The Lord be with you.

And with your Spirit.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: ‘For as were
the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of
Man. For as in those days before the flood they were
eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage,
until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they
were unaware until the flood came and swept them
all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then
two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one
left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will
be taken and one left. Therefore, stay awake, for you
do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But
know this, that if the master of the house had known
in what part of the night the thief was coming, he
would have stayed awake and would not have let his
house be broken into. Therefore you also must be
ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you
do not expect.’

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

First Sunday of Advent

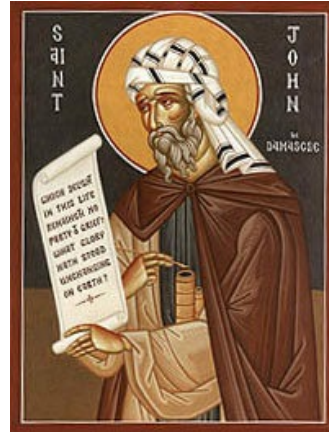
Lectionary Year A

The Word of God

Saint of the Week

Thursday 4 December 2025

**Saint John Damascene, priest,
Doctor of the Church**



St John was born of a Christian family in Damascus in the second half of the seventh century, where his father was a high official under the Umayyad caliph; a post which he inherited. When the Iconoclast movement (seeking to prohibit the veneration of icons) gained acceptance in the Byzantine court, John, being under Muslim rather than Byzantine rule, was able to

write effective treatises attacking Iconoclasm and attacking the emperor for supporting it. At about this time he retired to the monastery of Saint Sabas near Jerusalem, where he became a monk and was ordained. He died in the middle of the eighth century. His name was reviled and execrated by the imperial Iconoclast party even after his death.

His genius was not for original theological development, but for compilation of an encyclopedic character. In fact, the state of full development to which theological thought had been brought by the great Greek writers and councils left him little else than the work of an encyclopedist; and this work he performed in such manner as to merit the gratitude of all succeeding ages. Some consider him the precursor of the Scholastics, whilst others regard him as the first Scholastic, and his "De fide orthodoxa" (Concerning the Orthodox Faith) as the first work of Scholasticism. The Arabians too, owe not a little of the fame of their philosophy to his inspiration. The most important and best known of all his works is that to which the author himself gave the name of "Fountain of Wisdom". This work has always been held in the highest esteem in both the Catholic and Greek Churches. Its merit is not that of originality, for the author asserts, at the end of the second chapter of the "Dialectic", that it is not his purpose to set forth his own views, but rather to collate and epitomize in a single work the opinions of the great ecclesiastical writers who have gone before him. A special interest attaches to it for the reason that it is the first attempt at a summa theologica that has come down to us.

Sometimes known as "the last of the Church Fathers," he was declared a Doctor of the Church by Pope Leo XIII in 1883.

Today the season of Advent begins, a journey of spiritual renewal in preparation for Christmas. We often speak of Advent as being a season of time in which we prepare for the Lord's coming into our lives. Perhaps we should see it as a season of heightened awareness, for the truth is that we should be looking for God already at work in our lives every day. God is always offering Himself to us. We, however, are not always responding because we're not paying attention. Advent is a time to conscientiously, deliberately, and with awareness respond to His offer of Himself to us.

Christ's coming into the world of man – into our world and our lives – must be more than an isolated memory or a momentary celebration. The worthy celebration of Christmas requires purification and growth in the theological virtues of faith, hope and love. These virtues provide the framework for Christian life and find their origin in the mystery of Christ, especially his Incarnation and birth.

Our Christian vocation flows from the mystery of the Incarnation, and Advent is the perfect season to explore its greatness and transcendence. It is the time, par excellence, to prepare our hearts for the unexpected gift of peace.

Prayer of the Week

A Prayer for Advent

Advent God,
we journey with you,
to Bethlehem's stable
and a new-born King,
ears attuned
to the song of angels,
eyes alert
for Bethlehem's star.
Forgive us
if on our journey
we are distracted
by the tempting offers
of this world.
Keep our hearts aflame
with the hope
of Christmas,
and the promise
of a Saviour.

Amen