

Sunday Readings

8 December 2024

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Baruch 5:1-9

Take off the garment of your sorrow and affliction,
O Jerusalem,
and put on for ever the beauty of the glory from
God.
Put on the robe of the righteousness from God;
put on your head the crown of the glory of the
Everlasting.
For God will show your splendour everywhere
under heaven.
For your name will for ever be called by God:
'Peace of righteousness and glory of godliness'.
Arise, O Jerusalem, stand upon the height
and look towards the east
and see your children gathered from west and east,
at the word of the Holy One,
rejoicing that God has remembered them.
For they went forth from you on foot,
led away by their enemies;
but God will bring them back to you,
carried in glory, as on a royal throne.
For God has ordered that every high mountain
and the everlasting hills be made low
and the valleys filled up to make level ground,
so that Israel may walk safely in the glory of God.
The woods and every fragrant tree
have shaded Israel at God's command.
For God will lead Israel with joy
in the light of his glory,
with the mercy and righteousness that come from
him.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 125:1-6

***R/. What marvels the Lord worked for us!
Indeed we were glad!***

When the Lord delivered Zion from bondage,
it seemed like a dream.
Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
on our lips there were songs. **R/.**

The heathens themselves said: 'What marvels
the Lord worked for them!'
What marvels the Lord worked for us!
Indeed we were glad. **R/.**

Deliver us, O Lord, from our bondage
as streams in dry land.
Those who are sowing in tears
will sing when they reap. **R/.**

They go out, they go out, full of tears,
carrying seed for the sowing;
they come back, they come back, full of song,
carrying their sheaves. **R/.**

SECOND READING

A reading from the first letter of St Paul
to the Philippians 1:4-6,8-11

Brothers and sisters: I thank my God in all my
remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine
for you all, making my prayer with joy, because of your
partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.
And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work
in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus
Christ.

For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with
the affection of Christ Jesus. And it is my prayer that
your love may abound more and more, with knowledge
and all discernment, so that you may approve what
is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day
of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that
comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise
of God.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Luke 3:4,6

Alleluia, alleluia!

Prepare a way for the Lord,
make his paths straight,
and all mankind shall see the salvation of God.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Luke 3:1-6

The Lord be with you.

And with your Spirit.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.
Glory to you, O Lord.

'In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar,
Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod
being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip
tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and
Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the high
priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God
came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

And he went into all the region around the Jordan,
proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the
forgiveness of sins. As it is written in the book of the
words of Isaiah the prophet,

'The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

"Prepare the way of the Lord,

make his paths straight.

Every valley shall be filled,

and every mountain and hill shall be made low,

and the crooked shall become straight,

and the rough places shall become level ways,

and all flesh shall see the salvation of God." '

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Second Sunday of Advent

Lectionary Year C

The Word of God

Saint of the Week

Advent is a season full of joy. It is a joy which comes from a deep sense of expectation – and that has been the nature of Advent since it developed in the Church in the fifth century. Not so much a penitential period, more an excited time of spiritual preparation. It is a time when we look forward to the coming of Christ at Christmas, when we feel in our bones the certainty that we have a Redeemer, and that he is with us and knows our need. The keenness of our anticipation comes from the fact that we also look back to the past. The Christian Church has never forgotten what it was like not to know Christ. It has never forgotten how fervently the people of God longed for a Saviour. In this season we remember that longing, and share it.

As a result of this, we feel a profound sense of unity with our past - with all that gone before us in the Christian dispensation, and throughout Salvation History. As we look up at the immensity of Creation and see in it the glory of God, we also find that same glory in the story of young family who found no room at the inn, and in the birth of the Holy Child who would bring peace to his people.

For a moment, as we pray our way towards Christmas in this Advent season, we glimpse the eternal realities that lie beyond the chance and changes of our daily round, and we taste the peace and beauty that lies at the heart of all things.

Saturday 14 December 2024

St John of the Cross

(1542 - 1591)



He was born in Fontiveros, in Spain, in about 1542. He spent some time as a Carmelite friar before, in 1568, Saint Teresa of Ávila persuaded him to pioneer the reform of the Carmelite order. This was a difficult task and a dangerous one: he suffered imprisonment and severe punishment at the hands of the Church authorities. He died at the monastery of Ubeda in Andalusia on 14 December 1591:

the monks there had initially treated him as the worst of sinners, but by the time he died they had recognised his sanctity and his funeral was the occasion of a great outburst of enthusiasm.

His works include two major mystical poems – he is considered one of the great poets of the Spanish language – and detailed commentaries on them and the spiritual truths they convey. He was canonized in 1726 and declared a Doctor of the Church in 1926.

Prayer of the Week

A Grace before meals for



Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation,
in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you

in this food and in our sharing.

Blessed are you as we wait in joyful hope
for the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and for ever.

Amen.

