

# Sunday Readings

## 14th December 2025

### Collect

O God, who see how your people  
faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity,  
enable us, we pray,  
to attain the joys of so great a salvation  
and to celebrate them always  
with solemn worship and glad rejoicing.  
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.

### FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Isaiah 35:1-6,10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus;  
it shall blossom abundantly  
and rejoice with joy and singing.  
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,  
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.  
They shall see the glory of the LORD,  
the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands,  
and make firm the feeble knees.  
Say to those who have an anxious heart,  
'Be strong; fear not!  
Behold, your God will come with vengeance,  
with the recompense of God.  
He will come and save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;  
then shall the lame man leap like a deer,  
and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.

And the ransomed of the LORD shall return  
and come to Sion with singing;  
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;  
they shall obtain gladness and joy,  
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

### Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 145:6-10

**R/. Come, Lord, and save us.**

It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever,  
who is just to those who are oppressed.  
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,  
the Lord, who sets prisoners free, **R/.**

It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind,  
who raises up those who are bowed down,  
the Lord, who protects the stranger  
and upholds the widow and orphan. **R/.**

It is the Lord who loves the just  
but thwarts the path of the wicked.  
The Lord will reign for ever,  
Zion's God, from age to age. **R/.**

### SECOND READING

A reading from the first letter of St James 5:7-10

Be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

### Gospel Acclamation

**Isaiah 61:1 (Luke 4:18)**

Alleluia, alleluia.  
The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;  
he has sent me to proclaim good news to the poor.  
Alleluia.

### GOSPEL

Matthew 11:2-11

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: When John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?'

And Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.'

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.

'What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written,

"Behold, I send my messenger before your face,  
who will prepare your way before you."

'Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.'

The Gospel of the Lord.  
*Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*

# Third Sunday of Advent

Lectionary Year A

The Word of God

Poem of the Week



There is such beauty and richness in the Scripture Readings chosen for this Third Sunday of Advent. The theme is twofold: God is coming to save us, so, we must be filled with joy and must patiently prepare ourselves for the arrival by repenting and turning ourselves around. Our Advent is both a nostalgic event and one

which also looks forward to a future glory.

In this Advent season of grace, we are being asked to focus on the messianic signs of healing and goodness that surround us. The Advent liturgy of today invites us to open our hearts to the 'miracles of life' wrought by Jesus Christ. They give us great comfort and joy and enable us to experience an exquisite flowering in the desert of our soul if only we are open to grace. As people of Advent expectation, today we are called to be sensitive to the mystery of the 'healing joy' and to be efficacious bearers of Christian joy. As the Opening Prayer suggests, we need to 'experience the joy of salvation' – that power of healing and wholeness which Jesus can bring into our lives. This is something each one of us has to do and what we as a community also have to do. And this is the Good News of today.



## PRAYER of the Week

### A Prayer for Advent

Father in heaven, our hearts desire the warmth of your love and our minds are searching for the light of your Word.  
Increase our longing for Christ our Saviour and give us the strength to grow in love, that the dawn of his coming may find us rejoicing in his presence and welcoming the light of his truth.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.  
Amen.

### Advent

This Advent moon shines cold and clear,  
These Advent nights are long;  
Our lamps have burned year after year,  
And still their flame is strong.  
"Watchman, what of the night?" we cry,  
Heart-sick with hope deferred:  
"No speaking signs are in the sky,"  
Is still the watchman's word.

The Porter watches at the gate,  
The servants watch within;  
The watch is long betimes and late,  
The prize is slow to win.  
"Watchman, what of the night?" but still  
His answer sounds the same:  
"No daybreak tops the utmost hill,  
Nor pale our lamps of flame."

One to another hear them speak,  
The patient virgins wise:  
"Surely He is not far to seek,"—  
"All night we watch and rise."  
"The days are evil looking back,  
The coming days are dim;  
Yet count we not His promise slack,  
But watch and wait for Him."

One with another, soul with soul,  
They kindle fire from fire:  
"Friends watch us who have touched the goal."  
"They urge us, come up higher."  
"With them shall rest our waysore feet,  
With them is built our home,  
With Christ." "They sweet, but He most sweet,  
Sweeter than honeycomb."

There no more parting, no more pain,  
The distant ones brought near,  
The lost so long are found again,  
Long lost but longer dear:  
Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard,  
Nor heart conceived that rest,  
With them our good things long deferred,  
With Jesus Christ our Best.

We weep because the night is long,  
We laugh, for day shall rise,  
We sing a slow contented song  
And knock at Paradise.  
Weeping we hold Him fast Who wept  
For us,—we hold Him fast;  
And will not let Him go except  
He bless us first or last.

Weeping we hold Him fast to-night;  
We will not let Him go  
Till daybreak smite our wearied sight,  
And summer smite the snow:  
Then figs shall bud, and dove with dove  
Shall coo the livelong day;  
Then He shall say, "Arise, My love,  
My fair one, come away."

Christina Rossetti