

# Sunday Readings

## 15 December 2024

### 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. Amen.

### FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Zephaniah 3:14-18

Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! The LORD has taken away the judgements against you; he has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall never again fear evil. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: 'Fear not, O Zion; let not your hands grow weak. The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing. I will gather those of you who mourn for the festival, so that you will no longer suffer reproach.'

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

### Responsorial Psalm

*Isaiah 12:2-6. R/. v.6*

**R/. Sing and shout for joy for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.**

Truly, God is my salvation,  
I trust, I shall not fear.  
For the Lord is my strength, my song,  
he became my saviour.  
With joy you will draw water  
from the wells of salvation. **R/.**

Give thanks to the Lord, give praise to his name!  
Make his mighty deeds known to the peoples!  
Declare the greatness of his name. **R/.**

Sing a psalm to the Lord  
for he has done glorious deeds;  
make them known to all the earth!  
People of Zion, sing and shout for joy,  
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.  
**R/.**

### SECOND READING

A reading from the first letter of St Paul  
to the Philippians

4:4-7

Brothers and sisters: Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

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

### Gospel Acclamation

Is 61:1 (Lk 4:18)

*Alleluia, alleluia!*

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me.  
He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor.  
*Alleluia!*

### GOSPEL

Luke 3:10-18

The Lord be with you.  
*And with your Spirit.*

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

At that time: The crowds asked John, 'What, then, shall we do?' And he answered them, 'Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise.' Tax collectors also came to be baptised and said to him, 'Teacher, what shall we do?' And he said to them, 'Collect no more than you are authorized to do.' Soldiers also asked him, 'And we, what shall we do?' And he said to them, 'Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and be content with your wages.'

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ, John answered them all, saying, 'I baptise you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.' So with many other exhortations he preached good news to the people.

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

### Prayer after Communion

We implore your mercy, Lord,  
that this divine sustenance may cleanse us of our  
faults and prepare us for the coming feasts.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



# Third Sunday of Advent

Lectionary Year C

The Word of God

Saint of the Week



The liturgical texts of this Third Sunday of Advent are a hymn to joy: joy for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who will witness the departure of Assyrian domination and idolatry and will be able to worship God freely. There is joy for Christians, a constant and overwhelming joy because the peace of God “...which is beyond our understanding will

guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.” There is joy for God himself, who rejoices to be in the midst of his people to protect and save them. And there is the joy John the Baptist communicates to the people by preaching the Good News of the saving Messiah, who with his coming will establish justice and peace among human beings.

Why be joyful? We find several reasons in the liturgical texts. Rejoice because God is in your midst. This divine presence of power and salvation frees from all fears and renews the kingdom of Judah with its love. It is a protecting and safe presence.

Rejoice, because the Christian possesses the peace of God that goes beyond all understanding. This faith in God, the fruit of faith and baptism, is experienced in the liturgical celebration when we “tell God all our desires of every kind in prayer and petition full of gratitude”. Finally, rejoice because John the Baptist, the forerunner, proclaims the Good News of Christ and, with him and like him, all the precursors of Christ in society and in the world. In light of all this, we can say that Christianity is the religion of joy. It is joy in the Lord, as St Paul reminds us.



**Monday 16 December 2024**

**Blessed Mary of the Angels**

Born in Turin, Italy, in 1661, she died, after spending her whole life there, in 1717. In 1675 she entered the Discalced Carmelite Convent of St Christina, and several times filled the offices of Prioress and Novice Mistress. She underwent continual spiritual trials, but was constant in her ardent love of God. She was outstandingly faithful to prayer and particularly devoted to St Joseph, in whose honour a convent was founded through her good offices at Moncalieri.

## About Today

The third Sunday of Advent tells us ‘*Gaudete, rejoice!*’ because the Lord is near and the fourth Sunday of Lent says ‘*Laetare, Jerusalem, be joyful, Jerusalem, and all who love her!*’ because she herself is loved by the Lord. On Gaudete and Laetare Sundays, therefore, the dark penitential violet may be lightened to what the documents call ‘rose’ but most laymen would call ‘pink’.

This happens where it is traditional, and appropriate, and vestments of this extra colour are available. Otherwise there is nothing wrong in keeping violet as violet. Ultimately the liturgical colours are there to serve us, not we to serve them.

## 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.