

Sunday 7 December – Second Sunday of Advent

Collect

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power
and come among us,
and with great might succour us;
that whereas, through our sins and wickedness
we are grievously hindered
in running the race that is set before us,
your bountiful grace and mercy
may speedily help and deliver us;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honour and glory, now and for ever.

First Reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.
The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him –
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and of power,
the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD –
and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.
He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,
or decide by what he hears with his ears;
but with righteousness he will judge the needy,
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.
He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.
Righteousness will be his belt
and faithfulness the sash round his waist.
The wolf will live with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,
the calf and the lion and the yearling together;
and a little child will lead them.
The cow will feed with the bear,
their young will lie down together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

The infant will play near the hole of the cobra,
and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest.
They will neither harm nor destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious.

Psalm 72:1-7,18-19

Give the king your judgements, O God, ♦
and your righteousness to the son of a king.

Then shall he judge your people righteously ♦
and your poor with justice.

May the mountains bring forth peace, ♦
and the little hills righteousness for the people.

May he defend the poor among the people, ♦
deliver the children of the needy and crush the oppressor.

May he live as long as the sun and moon endure, ♦
from one generation to another.

May he come down like rain upon the mown grass, ♦
like the showers that water the earth.

In his time shall righteousness flourish, ♦
and abundance of peace
till the moon shall be no more.

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, ♦
who alone does wonderful things.

And blessed be his glorious name for ever. ♦
May all the earth be filled with his glory.
Amen. Amen.

Second Reading: Romans 15:4-13

Everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs so that the Gentiles may glorify God for his mercy, as it is written:

“Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles;
I will sing hymns to your name.”

Again, it says,

“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.”

And again,

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,
and sing praises to him, all you peoples.”

And again, Isaiah says,

“The Root of Jesse will spring up,
one who will arise to rule over the nations;
the Gentiles will hope in him.”

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Gospel: Matthew 3:1-12

¹In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, ²‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.’ ³This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

‘The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
“Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.”’

⁴Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his

waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, ⁶and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁷But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruit worthy of repentance. ⁹Do not presume to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ¹⁰Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ¹¹I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹²His winnowing-fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing-floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'