

Readings + Second Sunday of Advent A + 7 December 2026

Prayer of the Day

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

First Reading Isaiah 11:1-10

- ¹ A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
² The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
³ His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;
⁴ but with righteousness shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the oppressed of the
earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips shall kill the
wicked.
⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.
⁶ The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion will feed together,
and a little child shall lead them.
⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
⁸ The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the
adder's den.
⁹ They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy
mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge
of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.
¹⁰ On that day there will stand as a signal to the
peoples the root of Jesse; of whom the nations
shall inquire, and whose dwelling shall be glorious.

Psalmody Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

Give the king your justice, O God, and your
righteousness to the king's son;
**that he may rule your people righteously and
the poor with justice;**
that the mountains may bring prosperity to the
people, and the hills, in righteousness.
**Let him defend the needy among the people,
rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**
May he live as long as the sun and moon endure,
from one generation to another.
**Let him come down like rain upon the mown
field, like showers that water the earth.**
In his time may the righteous flourish; and let
there be an abundance of peace till the moon
shall be no more.
**Blessed are you, LORD God, the God of
Israel; you alone do wondrous deeds!**
And blessed be your glorious name forever, and
may all the earth be filled with your glory.
Amen. Amen.

Second Reading Romans 15:4-13

Paul writes: ⁴ Whatever was written in former
days was written for our instruction, so that by
steadfastness and by the encouragement of the
scriptures we might have hope. ⁵ May the God of
steadfastness and encouragement grant you to
live in harmony with one another, in accordance
with Christ Jesus, ⁶ so that together you may with
one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord
Jesus Christ.
⁷ Welcome one another, therefore, just as
Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.
⁸ For I tell you that Christ has become a servant
of the Jewish people on behalf of the truth of
God in order to confirm the promises given to
the ancestors, ⁹ and in order that the gentiles
might glorify our merciful God. As it is written,
“Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles,
and sing praises to your name”;
¹⁰ and again it is said,
“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with the people of God”;
¹¹ and again,

“Praise the Lord, all you gentiles,
and let all the peoples praise the Lord”;

¹² and again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse shall come,
the one who rises to rule the gentiles;
in whom the gentiles shall hope.”

¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy
and peace in believing, so that you may abound in
hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Holy Gospel Matthew 3:1-12

*Matthew and Mark share essentially the same
introduction to John, but in different order:*

¹ In those days John the Baptist appeared in
the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming,

² “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has
come near.”

³ This 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 straight the paths of the Lord.’”

⁴ Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with
a leather belt around his waist, and his food was
locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then Jerusalem and all
Judea and all the region around the Jordan were
going out to him, ⁶ and they were baptized by him
in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

*Here Matthew joins Luke in describing John’s
preaching; Mark doesn’t include this section:*

⁷ But when John saw many Pharisees and
Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to
them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to
flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Therefore, bear
fruit worthy of repentance, ⁹ and do 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. ¹⁰ Even
now the ax is lying at the root of the trees;
therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit
will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

*Matthew and Luke share this baptismal declaration,
including “with fire,” and both have the verse on
“winnowing”; Mark only quotes the sandals line,
and speaks of baptism only with the Holy Spirit.
Matthew is the only one who includes “for
repentance” regarding baptism with water.*

¹¹ “I baptize you with water for repentance,
but one who is coming after me is more powerful
than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals.
He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.
¹² With a winnowing fork in hand, he will clear his
threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the
granary; but the chaff he will burn with
unquenchable fire.”