

# Readings + Third Sunday of Advent A + 14 December 2025

## Prayer of the Day

Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; 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 35:1-10

- <sup>1</sup> The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;  
like the crocus <sup>2</sup> it shall blossom abundantly,  
and rejoice with joy and shouting.  
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.
- <sup>3</sup> Strengthen the weak hands,  
and make firm the feeble knees.
- <sup>4</sup> Say to those who are of a fearful heart,  
"Be strong, do not fear!  
Here is your God,  
who will come with vengeance,  
with terrible recompense.  
God will come and save you."
- <sup>5</sup> Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;
- <sup>6</sup> then the lame shall leap like a deer,  
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.  
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,  
and streams in the desert;
- <sup>7</sup> the burning sand shall become a pool,  
and the thirsty ground springs of water;  
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,  
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.
- <sup>8</sup> A highway shall be there,  
and it shall be called the Holy Way;  
the unclean shall not travel on it,  
but it shall be for God's people;  
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.
- <sup>9</sup> No lion shall be there,  
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;  
they shall not be found there,

but the redeemed shall walk there.

- <sup>10</sup> And the ransomed of the LORD shall return,  
and come to Zion with singing;  
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;  
they shall obtain joy and gladness,  
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

## Psalmody Psalm 146:5-10

Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for  
their help, whose hope is in the LORD their  
God;  
**who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all  
that is in them; who keeps promises forever;**  
who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and  
food to those who hunger. The LORD sets the  
captive free.  
**The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the  
LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;  
The LORD loves the righteous.**  
The LORD cares for the stranger; The LORD  
sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates  
the way of the wicked.  
**The LORD shall reign forever, your God, O  
Zion, throughout all generations.  
Hallelujah!**

## Second Reading James 5:7-10

<sup>7</sup> Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the  
coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the  
precious crop from the earth, being patient with it  
until it receives the early and the late rains. <sup>8</sup> You  
also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for  
the coming of the Lord is near.

<sup>9</sup> My dear family, do not grumble against one  
another, so that you may not be judged. See, the  
Judge is standing at the doors! <sup>10</sup> As an example  
of suffering and patience, beloved, take the  
prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

## Holy Gospel    Matthew 11:2-11

*Matthew and Luke tell this story, with few changes; only Matthew's telling is assigned in the lectionary.*

<sup>2</sup> When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples <sup>3</sup> and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" <sup>4</sup> Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup> those who are blind receive their sight, those who are lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. <sup>6</sup> And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

<sup>7</sup> As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? <sup>8</sup> What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. <sup>9</sup> What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup> This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' <sup>11</sup> I tell you the truth, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the dominion of heaven is greater than he."