

# Readings + Fourth Sunday after Epiphany, year A + 1 February 2026

## Prayer of the Day

Holy God, you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly and the pure in heart. Give us such a hunger and thirst for justice, and perseverance in striving for peace, that in our words and deeds the world may see the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen

## First Reading Micah 6:1-8

<sup>1</sup> Hear what the LORD says:

Rise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice.

<sup>2</sup> Hear, you mountains, the case of the LORD, and you enduring foundations of the earth; for the LORD has a case against the chosen people, and the LORD will contend with Israel.

<sup>3</sup> "O my people, what have I done to you?

In what have I wearied you?

Answer me!

<sup>4</sup> For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and redeemed you from the house of slavery; and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.

<sup>5</sup> O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised, what Balaam son of Beor answered him, and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the saving acts of the LORD."

<sup>6</sup> "With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before God on high?

Shall I come before God with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?

<sup>7</sup> Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil?

Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

<sup>8</sup> The LORD has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

## Psalmody Psalm 15

LORD, who may dwell in your tabernacle? Who may abide upon your holy hill?

**Those who lead a blameless life and do what is right, who speak the truth from their heart;**

they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil to their friends; they do not cast discredit upon a neighbor.

**In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who fear the LORD. They have sworn upon their health and do not take back their word.**

They do not give their money in hope of gain, nor do they take bribes against the innocent. Those who do these things shall never be overthrown.

## Second Reading 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

*Paul writes,* <sup>18</sup> The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

<sup>19</sup> For it is written,

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

<sup>20</sup> Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scholar? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

<sup>21</sup> For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of the proclamation, to save those who believe. <sup>22</sup> For Jews ask for signs and Greeks desire wisdom, <sup>23</sup> but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, <sup>24</sup> but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup> For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

<sup>26</sup> Consider your own call, my dear family: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble

birth. <sup>27</sup> But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; <sup>28</sup> God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to abolish things that are, <sup>29</sup> so that no one might boast in the presence of God.

<sup>30</sup> In contrast, God is why you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, <sup>31</sup> in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

## Holy Gospel    Matthew 5:1-12

*Matthew and Luke both tell of Jesus giving a series of “blessed are you” sayings, both early in Jesus’ ministry. Luke’s account includes a series of “woe to you” sayings. Only Matthew has v. 4, those who mourn, v. 5, the gentle, and vv. 7-9, the merciful, the pure in heart, and the peacemakers. Luke includes “those who weep now,” not on Matthew’s list.*

<sup>1</sup> When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup> And Jesus began to speak, and taught them, saying:

<sup>3</sup> “Those who are poor in spirit are blessed, for theirs is the reign of heaven.

<sup>4</sup> “Those who mourn are blessed, for they will be comforted.

<sup>5</sup> “Those who are gentle are blessed, for they will inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup> “Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness are blessed, for they will be filled.

<sup>7</sup> “Those who are merciful are blessed, for they will receive mercy.

<sup>8</sup> “Those who are pure in heart are blessed, for they will see God.

<sup>9</sup> “Those who are peacemakers are blessed, for they will be called children of God.

<sup>10</sup> “Those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness are blessed, for theirs is the reign of heaven.

<sup>11</sup> “You are blessed when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup> Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”