

# SUNDAY READINGS & PRAYERS

2 BEFORE ADVENT (YEAR A)

## COLLECT

Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son was revealed to destroy the works of the devil and to make us the children of God and heirs of eternal life: grant that we, having this hope, may purify ourselves even as he is pure; that when he shall appear in power and great glory we may be made like him in his eternal and glorious kingdom; where he is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

## FIRST READING

*Zep 1.7,12-18*

A reading from the prophet Zephaniah.

Be silent before the Lord God! For the day of the Lord is at hand; the Lord has prepared a sacrifice, he has consecrated his guests.

At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the people who rest complacently on their dregs, those who say in their hearts, 'The Lord will not do good, nor will he do harm.' Their wealth shall be plundered, and their houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them. The great day of the Lord is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the Lord is bitter, the warrior cries aloud there. That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements. I will bring such distress upon people that they shall walk like the blind; because they have sinned against the Lord, their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung. Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the Lord's wrath; in the fire of his passion the whole earth shall

be consumed; for a full, a terrible end he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

*from Ps 90*



℣. Fill us with your love, that we may rejoice.

*(All repeat)*



Lord you have <sup>1</sup> been our refuge  
from one generation <sup>1</sup> to another.  
Before the mountains or the earth <sup>1</sup> were  
brought forth,  
from age to age <sup>1</sup> you are God. ℣.

You turn men back <sup>1</sup> to the dust,  
saying 'Go back, O child-<sup>1</sup>ren of men.'  
For a thousand years in your sight are as the  
passing <sup>1</sup> of a day  
or as a watch <sup>1</sup> in the night. ℣.

You sweep men away <sup>1</sup> like a dream,  
they fade away suddenly <sup>1</sup> like the grass.  
In the morning it springs <sup>1</sup> up and flowers;  
in the evening it is dried <sup>1</sup> up and withered. ℣.

For you have set our <sup>1</sup> sins before you,  
and our iniquities be-<sup>1</sup>fore your face.  
Make us know the shortness <sup>1</sup> of our days,  
that we may apply our <sup>1</sup> hearts to wisdom. ℣.

## SECOND READING

*1 The 5.1-11*

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Thessalonians.

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When they say, 'There is peace and security', then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labour pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of

the night or of darkness. So then, let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Rev 2.10*

*Alleluia.*

Be faithful unto death, says the Lord: and I will give you the crown of life. *Alleluia.*

GOSPEL READING

*Mt 25.14-30*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Hear the Gospel ✠ of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus told this parable to the disciples:

“The kingdom of heaven will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master’s money.

“Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents

more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’ But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

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PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord, grant that the offering we make to you may help us to grow in holiness and bring us to eternal life in heaven; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

POST-COMMUNION

Gracious Lord, in this holy sacrament you give substance to our hope: bring us at the last to that fullness of life for which we long; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**