Sunday 11 December 2022 Third Sunday of Advent

COLLECT

O Lord Jesus Christ,
who at your first coming sent your messenger
to prepare your way before you:
grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries
may likewise so prepare and make ready your way
by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just,
that at your second coming to judge the world
we may be found an acceptable people in your sight;
for you are alive and reign with the Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING Isaiah 35:1-10

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. 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. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; 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; 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. 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 traveller, not even fools, shall go astray. 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. 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.

PSALM OR CANTICLE

Either **Psalm 146:4-10**

R *The Lord shall reign for ever.*

Happy are those who have the God of Jacob for their help,
whose hope is in the Lord their God;
Who made heaven and earth,
the sea and all that is in them;
who keeps his promise for ever;
Who gives justice to those that suffer wrong
and bread to those who hunger. **R**

The Lord looses those that are bound;
the Lord opens the eyes of the blind;
The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;
the Lord loves the righteous; **R**

The Lord watches over the stranger in the land; he upholds the orphan and widow;
but the way of the wicked he turns upside down.
The Lord shall reign for ever,
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations.
Alleluia. **R**

Or **Luke 1:46*b*-55 (Magnificat)**

R *My soul doth magnify the Lord.*

My soul doth magnify the Lord
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
For he hath regarded
the lowliness of his handmaiden.
For behold, from henceforth
all generations shall call me blessed.
For he that is mighty hath magnified me
and holy is his Name. **R**

And his mercy is on them that fear him
throughout all generations.
He hath shewed strength with his arm
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. **R**

He hath put down the mighty from their seat
and hath exalted the humble and meek.
He hath filled the hungry with good things
and the rich he hath sent empty away. **R**

He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel
as he promised to our forefathers,
Abraham and his seed for ever. **R**

SECOND READING James 5:7-10

A reading from the letter of James.

Be patient, 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. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

GOSPEL Matthew 11:2-11

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to Jesus, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me." 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? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. 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.' Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

POST COMMUNION

We give you thanks, O Lord, for these heavenly gifts;
kindle in us the fire of your Spirit
that when your Christ comes again
we may shine as lights before his face;
who is alive and reigns now and for ever.

Sunday. *The Revised Common Lectionary* is copyright © the Consultation on Common Texts, 1992. *The Christian Year: Calendar, Lectionary and Collects*, 1997, which includes *The Common Worship Lectionary* (the Church of England's adaptations of the *Revised Common Lectionary*, published as the Principal Service Lectionary) and the compilation of Collects and Post Communion Prayers, is copyright © The Archbishops' Council, and material from it is reproduced with permission. Bible readings from NRSV published by Mowbray and used by permission. All rights reserved. Copyright © Redemptorist Publications Wolf's Lane Chawton Hampshire GU34 3HQ. A Registered Charity limited by guarantee. Registered in England 03261721. www.rpbooks.co.uk Email rp@rpbooks.co.uk

redemptorist publications