

COLLECT

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power and come among us,
and with great might succour us;
that whereas, through our sins and wickedness
we are grievously hindered
in running the race that is set before us,
your bountiful grace and mercy
may speedily help and deliver us;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honour and glory, now and for ever.

FIRST READING Isaiah 11:1-10

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. 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. 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; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. 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. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

PSALM Psalm 72:1-7. 18-19

R *In his time shall the righteous flourish,
[and peace till the moon shall be no more].*

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 little hills bring righteousness. **R**

He shall defend the needy among
the people;
he shall rescue the poor and crush
the oppressor.
He shall live as long as the sun and
moon endure,
from one generation to another. **R**

He shall come down like rain upon the
mown field,
like showers that water the earth.
In his time shall the righteous flourish;
there shall be abundance of peace
till the moon shall be no more. **R**

Blessèd be the Lord God, the God of
Israel,
who alone does wondrous deeds!
And blessèd be his glorious name for
ever!
and may all the earth be filled with
his glory.
Amen. Amen. **R**

SECOND READING Romans 15:4-13

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

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. May the God of
steadfastness and encouragement
grant you to live in harmony with one
another, in accordance with Christ
Jesus, so that together you may with
one voice glorify the God and Father
of our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one
another, therefore, just as Christ has
welcomed you, for the glory of God.
For I tell you that Christ has become
a servant of the circumcised on behalf
of the truth of God in order that he
might confirm the promises given to
the patriarchs, and in order that the
Gentiles might glorify God for his
mercy. As it is written, "Therefore
I will confess you among the Gentiles,
and sing praises to your name"; and
again he says, "Rejoice, O Gentiles,
with his people"; and again, "Praise the
Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the
peoples praise him"; and again Isaiah
says, "The root of Jesse shall come, the

one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in
him the Gentiles shall hope." 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.

GOSPEL Matthew 3:1-12

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

In those days John the Baptist
appeared in the wilderness of Judea,
proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom
of heaven has come near." 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 his paths straight.'" Now John wore clothing of camel's hair
with a leather belt around his waist, and
his food was locusts and wild honey.
Then the people of Jerusalem and
all Judea were going out to him, and
all the region along the Jordan, and
they were baptised by him in the river
Jordan, confessing their sins. But when
he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees
coming for baptism, he said to them,
"You brood of vipers! Who warned
you to flee from the wrath to come?
Bear fruit worthy of repentance. 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. Even
now the axe is lying at the root of the
trees; every tree therefore that does not
bear good fruit is cut down and thrown
into the fire. I baptise you with water
for repentance, but one who is more
powerful than I is coming after me; I
am not worthy to carry his sandals. He
will baptise you with the Holy Spirit
and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his
hand, and he will clear his threshing-
floor and will gather his wheat into the
granary; but the chaff he will burn with
unquenchable fire."

POST COMMUNION

Father in heaven,
who sent your Son to redeem the world
and will send him again to be our judge:
give us grace so to imitate him in the
humility and purity of his first coming
that, when he comes again,
we may be ready to greet him
with joyful love and firm faith;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.