

SSRA.UK

Sunday Scriptures for Reading Aloud

Lectioary 2024

**Readings for Sundays
from 3 December 2023
to 24 November 2024**

The main programme pauses for an Easter series, kept in real time,
 from the entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday (one week before Easter Day),
 to the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (seven weeks after Easter Day);
 plus five weeks of readings in preparation (called Sundays of Lent)
 and Trinity Sunday to reflect on it all - fifteen Sundays in all

*The primary theme of Lent is the joyful anticipation of the triumph of Easter,
 and this is reflected in the readings for the season; any penitential theme is secondary*

	First Reading	Second Reading	Gospel
Lent 1	Year A fall, Year B flood, Year C salvation		Temptations of Jesus in the wilderness
Lent 2	The faith of Abraham		The Transfiguration
Lent 3	Readings from the history of Israel and the prophets	Salvation in Christ - readings from Saint Paul and Hebrews	Readings from John (and Luke in Year C)
Lent 4			
Lent 5			
Palm Sunday			
Easter Day	The Resurrection		
Easter 2	The Acts of the Apostles Year A the early days in Jerusalem Year B the emerging inclusion of the gentiles Year C the ministry of Saint Paul	Year A: 1 Peter Year B: 1 John Year C: Revelation	Resurrection appearances including Year A road to Emmaus, Year B Jerusalem, Year C lakeside
Easter 3			Good Shepherd Sunday – readings from John 10
Easter 4			Preparing for Pentecost with Jesus’ teachings and prayers for the future church - different sections each year from John 13-17
Easter 5			
Easter 6			
Easter 7	The day of Pentecost and the gift of the Holy Spirit		
Pentecost	God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit		
Trinity Sunday			

Finally a Christmas series runs from 27 November through to 6 January, to include the four
 Sundays of Advent, the twelve days of Christmas, and the visit of the Magi on 6 January, the Epiphany

The year letter changes on the first Sunday of Advent
 2024 is Year B - from 3 December 2023 to 24 November 2024

*Readings are also provided for Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday,
 Good Friday, Ascension Day, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day*

Numbering

SSRA gives the Sundays of the main programme the numbers 1 to 34
 with the name ‘Ordinary Time’ (as in LFM) - this serves to highlight the systematic reading
 of the gospel and epistles for the year across these 34 Sundays

Some lectionaries have different naming and numbering systems for the same 34 Sundays,
 variously calling them ‘Propers’, ‘after Epiphany’, ‘after Trinity’, ‘before Lent’, ‘before Advent’,
 and ‘of the Kingdom’ - sometimes with different definitions of Ordinary Time -
but they are the same Sundays, with the same readings.

In 2024, the ‘after Trinity’ number is the ‘Ordinary Time’ number minus eight.

You can also subtract five from the ‘Ordinary Time’ number
 to give the CW/RCL ‘Proper’ number, for accessing CW and RCL resources.

Compatibility: variations and additional options

As more and more denominations have adopted what is essentially the same lectionary, each has enriched the range of available material by adding its own variations and additional options. As a result, the various editions of the lectionary can end up being not quite 100% compatible.

As a practical, ready-to-use resource, SSRA makes selections from amongst the options and variations on offer, always prioritising the systematic reading of the gospels and epistles for the year, reducing interruptions and omissions to a minimum.

This is the programme followed by SSRA for the Gospel readings in Ordinary Time

	Year A	Year B	Year C
1	<u>Matthew 3</u> ¹³⁻¹⁷	<u>John 1</u> ²⁹⁻³⁴	<u>Luke 2</u> ²²⁻⁴⁰
2	<u>Matthew 4</u> ¹²⁻¹⁷	<u>John 1</u> ³⁵⁻⁴²	<u>Luke 2</u> ⁴¹⁻⁵²
3	<u>Matthew 4</u> ¹⁸⁻²⁵	<u>John 2</u> ¹⁻¹¹	<u>Luke 4</u> ¹⁴⁻²¹
4	<u>Matthew 5</u> ¹⁻¹²	<u>Mark 1</u> ¹⁴⁻²⁸	<u>Luke 4</u> ²¹⁻³⁰
5	<u>Matthew 5</u> ¹³⁻²⁰	<u>Mark 1</u> ²⁹⁻³⁹	<u>Luke 5</u> ¹⁻¹¹
6	<u>Matthew 5</u> ²⁰⁻³⁷	<u>Mark 1</u> ⁴⁰⁻⁴⁵	<u>Luke 6</u> ¹⁷⁻²⁶
7	<u>Matthew 5</u> ³⁸⁻⁴⁸	<u>Mark 2</u> ¹⁻¹²	<u>Luke 6</u> ²⁷⁻³⁸
8	<u>Matthew 6</u> ²⁴⁻³³	<u>Mark 2</u> ¹³⁻²²	<u>Luke 6</u> ³⁹⁻⁴⁹
9	<u>Matthew 7</u> ²¹⁻²⁹	<u>Mark 2</u> ²³⁻³⁶	<u>Luke 7</u> ²⁻¹⁰
10	<u>Matthew 9</u> ⁹⁻¹³	<u>Mark 3</u> ²⁰⁻³⁵	<u>Luke 7</u> ¹¹⁻¹⁷
11	<u>Matthew 9</u> ^{35-10⁸}	<u>Mark 4</u> ²⁶⁻³⁴	<u>Luke 7</u> ³⁶⁻⁵⁰
12	<u>Matthew 10</u> ²⁸⁻³¹	<u>Mark 4</u> ³⁵⁻⁴¹	<u>Luke 8</u> ^{1-3,26-39}
13	<u>Matthew 10</u> ³⁴⁻⁴²	<u>Mark 5</u> ²¹⁻⁴³	<u>Luke 9</u> ⁵¹⁻⁶²
14	<u>Matthew 11</u> ^{18-19,25-30}	<u>Mark 6</u> ¹⁻⁶	<u>Luke 10</u> ^{1-11,17-20,23-24}
15	<u>Matthew 13</u> ^{1-8,18-23}	<u>Mark 6</u> ⁷⁻¹³	<u>Luke 10</u> ²⁵⁻³⁷
16	<u>Matthew 13</u> ²⁴⁻³⁰	<u>Mark 6</u> ³⁰⁻³⁴	<u>Luke 10</u> ³⁸⁻⁴²
17	<u>Matthew 13</u> ^{31-33,44-46}	<u>John 6</u> ¹⁻²¹	<u>Luke 11</u> ¹⁻¹³
18	<u>Matthew 14</u> ¹³⁻²¹	<u>John 6</u> ²²⁻³⁵	<u>Luke 12</u> ¹³⁻²¹
19	<u>Matthew 14</u> ²²⁻³³	<u>John 6</u> ⁴¹⁻⁵¹	<u>Luke 12</u> ²²⁻³⁶
20	<u>Matthew 15</u> ²¹⁻²⁸	<u>John 6</u> ⁵¹⁻⁵⁸	<u>Luke 12</u> ⁴⁹⁻⁵⁶
21	<u>Matthew 16</u> ¹³⁻²⁰	<u>John 6</u> ⁶⁰⁻⁶⁹	<u>Luke 13</u> ¹⁰⁻¹⁷
22	<u>Matthew 16</u> ²¹⁻²⁶	<u>Mark 7</u> ^{1-8, 14-15, 21-23}	<u>Luke 14</u> ^{1,7-14}
23	<u>Matthew 18</u> ¹⁵⁻²⁰	<u>Mark 7</u> ²⁴⁻³⁷	<u>Luke 14</u> ²⁵⁻³³
24	<u>Matthew 18</u> ²¹⁻³⁵	<u>Mark 8</u> ²⁷⁻³⁶	<u>Luke 15</u> ¹⁻¹⁰
25	<u>Matthew 20</u> ¹⁻¹⁶	<u>Mark 9</u> ³⁰⁻³⁷	<u>Luke 16</u> ¹⁻¹³
26	<u>Matthew 21</u> ²³⁻³²	<u>Mark 9</u> ³⁸⁻⁵⁰	<u>Luke 16</u> ^{13b-15,19-31}
27	<u>Matthew 21</u> ^{33-41,43}	<u>Mark 10</u> ¹³⁻¹⁶	<u>Luke 17</u> ⁵⁻¹⁰
28	<u>Matthew 22</u> ¹⁻¹⁴	<u>Mark 10</u> ¹⁷⁻³¹	<u>Luke 17</u> ¹¹⁻¹⁹
29	<u>Matthew 22</u> ¹⁵⁻²²	<u>Mark 10</u> ³⁵⁻⁴⁵	<u>Luke 18</u> ^{1-8a}
30	<u>Matthew 22</u> ³⁵⁻⁴⁰	<u>Mark 10</u> ^{46b-52}	<u>Luke 18</u> ⁹⁻¹⁴
31	<u>Matthew 23</u> ²⁻¹²	<u>Mark 12</u> ^{28-34a}	<u>Luke 19</u> ¹⁻¹⁰
32	<u>Matthew 25</u> ¹⁻¹³	<u>Mark 12</u> ³⁸⁻⁴⁴	<u>Luke 19</u> ⁴¹⁻⁴⁸
33	<u>Matthew 25</u> ¹⁴⁻²⁹	<u>Mark 13</u> ¹⁻¹³	<u>Luke 21</u> ⁵⁻¹⁹
34	<u>Matthew 25</u> ³¹⁻⁴⁶	<u>John 18</u> ^{33b-37}	<u>Luke 23</u> ³³⁻⁴³

The underlinings above indicate those occasions where the gospel reading for the day may vary between lectionaries.

SSRA consistently prioritises the systematic reading of the gospel for the year.

This includes keeping the Second Sunday before Lent and the Last Sunday before Lent as Sundays in Ordinary Time, each complete with the gospel for the day, rather than displacing them to make way for a Creation or Transfiguration theme.

The Transfiguration is observed on the Second Sunday of Lent, as in LFM and RCL.

The Gospel readings for the fifteen Sundays of the Easter series are consistent across all lectionaries, except for the question of the Transfiguration reading on the Second Sunday of Lent, and different options for Pentecost and Trinity Sunday.

The Gospel readings in the Christmas series are consistent across all lectionaries through Advent and on Christmas Day, with variations limited to the two weeks between 26 December and 8 January. SSRA handles the practical lull experienced in most churches between Christmas and the Epiphany by celebrating Saint John the Evangelist on the first Sunday after Christmas (providing a different set of readings for each year), and moving the Holy Family readings from Saint Luke (including The Presentation) into January of Year C. The Epiphany is then kept on any Sunday falling between 2 and 6 January - with different Old Testament and Epistle readings provided for each year. The main programme for the year then begins resolutely on 7 January.

Old Testament readings and Epistles have less impact on the compatibility of lectionary-based resources, as the gospel is usually taken as the lead reading for the day; but Old Testament readings do occasionally vary, and epistle readings are occasionally out of sync - although the same epistles are always being read at the same time (with the one exception of a CW excursion into Revelation for three Sundays early in Year B).

The Acts of the Apostles is read in all lectionaries during Eastertide, but there is wide variation in the selection and arrangement of the readings. SSRA arranges readings from Acts across three annual themes: Year A highlights the early days in Jerusalem, Year B the emerging inclusion of the Gentiles, and Year C the ministry of Saint Paul.

The wedding at Cana (John 2.1-11) appears in sequence in Saint John's gospel in January of Year B, which is one of the options in CW.

All Saints Sunday is an option in CW for the Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time (the Fourth Sunday before Advent, the Sunday between 30 October and 5 November). SSRA has readings on that date suitable for an observation of All Saints / All Souls Sunday, without interrupting the sequential reading of the gospels and epistles for the year.

Remembrance Sunday is kept in the UK on the second Sunday in November, which is either the Thirty-second or the Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time (the Third or Second Sunday before Advent). SSRA has readings on both these Sundays suitable for an observation of Remembrance Sunday, without interrupting the sequential reading of the gospels and epistles for the year.

For Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday, SSRA provides different readings for each year of the three year cycle. The Maundy Thursday readings are themed: in Year A, the Lamb of God; in Year B, service to others (the washing of the disciples' feet); and in Year C, the Bread of Life.

Finally, some lectionaries offer readings for a Mothering Sunday theme on the Fourth Sunday of Lent, a Bible Sunday theme on the Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time (CW 'Last after Trinity'), plus Saints Days and other Festivals. In these cases, as elsewhere, SSRA prioritises the systematic reading of the gospels and epistles for the year, reducing interruptions and omissions to a minimum.

How to use SSRA

It is possible to dip in and out of SSRA during the year - but part of the purpose of SSRA is to take all the hard work out of finding, choosing, printing, and distributing the Sunday morning bible readings, for every Sunday of the year. When you adopt SSRA as a church, parish, or benefice, you can refer everyone who needs to know the readings for the day to the ssra.uk website, where they can see the readings for the day, and browse through the readings for the year.

The SSRA Translation

SSRA features a new translation prepared specifically for reading aloud, in ordinary churches, on ordinary Sunday mornings: to be easy on the eye, and on the voice, for the reader, so that the reader can read with confidence; and to be easy on the ear, for the hearer, who should be able to follow the reading, without needing a printed text, even on first hearing. Verses are occasionally rearranged to make a passage easier to follow when read aloud. A preacher may wish to refer to a more literal study translation (or indeed the original Greek or Hebrew) when making a word-by-word or line-by-line analysis of the text.

Additional resources and downloads are available online at ssra.uk

SUNDAY 3 DECEMBER

First Sunday of Advent

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 63.18 - 64.9*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Tear open the heavens, O Lord,
and come down, like a raging fire.
Let the mountains break apart
at your presence,
so that all the nations
tremble, and even your enemies
will know your name.
From ancient times, no eye has seen,
no ear has heard,
any God but you.
You rescue
those who trust in you.
You welcome
all who gladly do right.
But now our transgressions
have aroused your anger.
Our enemies
have destroyed your sanctuary,
and we have become like a people
that has never known you,
like a people that has never been
called by your name.
Even our most righteous deeds
are like a filthy garment before you.
We fade like a fallen leaf,
and our own iniquities
sweep us away, like the wind.
There is no one left amongst us who calls
on your name, or pleads with you for mercy.
You have turned your face away from us,
and abandoned us to our iniquity.
And yet, O Lord, you are our Father.
You are the potter, and we are the clay.
You made us; we are the work of your hands.
We are your people, O Lord.
Do not be angry with us beyond measure,
or remember our iniquity for ever.
This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *1 Corinthians 1.4-9*

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

Every day, I give thanks
for all that God is doing amongst you;
for in Christ,
you have grown in every way.
You have grown in your confidence
in the message of Christ;
and you have grown in every spiritual gift,
as you look for the coming of our Lord.
God has called you into the fellowship
of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ;
and we trust that God will continue
to give you the strength
that will keep you in holiness
for the day of the Lord.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 13.24-37*

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

Jesus said to his disciples, 'There will be
persecution and suffering,
until the day
when the sun and the moon
will give no light,
and the stars
will be shaken from the sky.
And then you will see
the Son of Man
coming in the clouds
with great power
and glory.
And he will send angels
to gather his chosen
from the furthest corners
of the heavens
and the earth.
When buds and then leaves
appear on the fig tree,
you know that summer is near.
In the same way,
when you see these things taking place,
you will know that the time is near.
All these things
will take place
before this generation has passed away.
The heavens
and the earth
will be destroyed;
but my words
will remain for ever.
No one knows
the day or the hour
at which
these things will take place:
not the angels in heaven,
nor even the Son;
but only the Father.
The master of the household
is going on a journey,
leaving the servants
each with their own task.
And you are appointed to keep watch.
You do not know
whether the master will return
at dawn, or in the evening, or in the night;
and he must not
find you sleeping
when he returns.
So I say to you, and to everyone:
be on your guard,
and stay alert,
for you do not know
when that day will come.
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 10 DECEMBER

Second Sunday of Advent

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 40.1-5a*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Comfort my people,
and speak tenderly to Jerusalem.
Let her know
that she has served her sentence.
Her penalty is paid.
She has already received,
from the Lord's hand,
double
for all her transgressions.
And now,
a voice cries out:
'In the wilderness,
prepare the way of the Lord.
Fill the valleys,
level the hills,
straighten the paths,
and make the rough ways
smooth.
And the glory of the Lord
will be revealed.'
This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *2 Peter 3.8-15a*

A reading from the second letter of Peter.

Some have said,
from a human perspective,
that the promises of the Lord
are slow
in coming to fulfilment.
But with the Lord,
a day
is like a thousand years,
and a thousand years
are like
a day.
So we do not
say
that the fulfilment
of the Lord's promise
is delayed.
Instead, we understand
that the Lord is being patient,
allowing time for all to repent;
for the Lord prefers
that none should perish.
For the day of the Lord
will come like a thief in the night.
With thunder and fire,
the heavens will pass away.
And the earth,
and everything upon it,
will be destroyed.

And there will be new heavens,
and a new earth,
where everything
will be made perfect
in the presence of God,
in fulfilment
of God's promises.
As we await that day,
let us live holy and godly lives,
at peace with God.
And let us remember
that the patience
of our Lord
is our gracious opportunity
for salvation.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 1.1-8*

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

Here begins
the good news,
the gospel of Jesus Christ,
the Son of God.
God spoke
through the prophet Isaiah,
saying, 'I am sending
my messenger
ahead of you,
to prepare the way,
a voice to cry out
in the wilderness,
"Prepare the way of the Lord."
And so
indeed
it came about
that John the Baptist
appeared in the wilderness,
proclaiming a baptism
of repentance
for the forgiveness of sins.
And all the people
of Judea and Jerusalem
were going out to him.
And they were baptised by him,
in the river Jordan,
confessing their sins.
His clothing
was made from camel's hair,
with a belt of leather;
and for food,
he ate locusts,
and wild honey.
And in his preaching, he said:
'I baptise you with water,
but after me
comes one who is more powerful.
I am not worthy
even to be his servant.
And he will baptise you
with the Holy Spirit.'
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 17 DECEMBER

Third Sunday of Advent

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 61.1-2, 10-11*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The spirit of the Lord God
is upon me,
for the Lord has anointed me
to bring good news
to the poor, the lowly, and the afflicted;
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
to bind up
the broken-hearted,
and to comfort
those who mourn;
to declare
the day of God's justice,
and the year of the Lord's favour.
So let us rejoice,
and sing praise
to the Lord our God.
For as bride and groom
are prepared in fine clothes
for their wedding,
so the Lord
has clothed us
with salvation and righteousness.
And as a garden
flourishes in the spring-time,
so the Lord God
will make righteousness
and praise
flourish in every nation.
This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *1 Thessalonians 5.16-23*

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

Rejoice always;
give thanks in all circumstances;
and pray without ceasing;
for this is the will of God for you
in Christ Jesus.
Do not quench the Spirit,
and do not treat prophecies
with contempt,
but test everything:
hold fast
to all that is good,
and keep away
from all that is evil.
And may the God of peace
keep you in holiness,
in body, mind, and spirit,
for the coming
of our Lord Jesus Christ.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 1.6-8, 19-28*

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

There was a man sent from God,
whose name was John.
John himself
was not the light.
But John came
to bear witness
to the light,
so that all might believe.
The temple authorities
in Jerusalem
sent a delegation
to the place where John was baptising.
They demanded
of John, 'Who are you?'
And John
told them plainly, 'I am not
the Messiah.'
So they asked him, 'What then?
Are you Elijah?
Are you the prophet?'
And when John
said that he was not,
they asked him again, 'Who are you?
Let us have an answer
for those who sent us!
What do you say about yourself?'
And John said
(using the words of the prophet Isaiah),
'I am the voice
crying out
in the wilderness,
"Make straight
the way of the Lord."
They asked him, 'Then why
are you baptising,
if you are not
the Messiah,
and not Elijah,
and not the prophet?'
And John answered them, 'I baptise in water,
but amongst you
stands one
you do not know,
the one who is
coming after me;
and I am not worthy
even to be
his servant.'
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 24 DECEMBER (morning)

Fourth Sunday of Advent

FIRST READING – 2 Samuel 7.1-9, 11b, 16

A reading from the second book of Samuel.

David, the king,
was settled in his house,
and the Lord had given him rest
from all his enemies around him.

So David said
to the prophet Nathan, 'I am now living
in a house
built from cedar,
but the ark of God
still lives
in a tent.'

At first,
the prophet Nathan replied, 'Do whatever
you have in mind;
for the Lord is with you.'

But that same night,
the word of the Lord
came to the prophet Nathan,
that he should instead
give to king David
this word from the Lord:

'I have not lived in a house
from the day I brought
the people of Israel
out of Egypt, to this day;
but I have travelled with my people,
with a tent
as my only dwelling.

I appointed leaders
to shepherd my people,
but I never asked
any one of them
to build me
a house of cedar.

I took you from the pasture,
from following the sheep,
to be my servant,
and the leader of my people.

Wherever you have gone,
I have been with you.
I have defeated your enemies
all around you.

And now, I will
make your name great
in all the earth.

You will not
make a house
for the Lord to live in.

But I, the Lord,
will make your house
and your kingdom
secure,
and establish your throne
for ever.'

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – Romans 16.25-27

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

Glory to God, who strengthens you
to stand firm
in the good news of Jesus Christ
that we proclaim!

And Glory to God,
at whose command
this good news
has been revealed,
first through the writings of the prophets,
and now
by proclamation to all the nations,
so that all people
might come to believe and trust
in Jesus Christ!

To the one eternal God of all wisdom
be glory for ever! Amen!
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Luke 1.26-38

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

The angel Gabriel was sent by God
to a town called Nazareth, in Galilee,
to Mary, engaged to a man called Joseph, who was
descended from the line of king David.

The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary
and said, 'Greetings, O favoured one!
The Lord is with you!'

Mary was overcome with fear,
and wondered what this greeting could mean.

The angel said, 'Mary, do not be afraid,
for you have found favour with God.

And now, you will conceive, and bear a son,
and you will name him Jesus.

He will be great, and will be called the Son
of the Most High.

And the Lord God will give to him
the throne
of his ancestor David.

He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever.
And his kingdom will never end.'

Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be,
for one who is
still a virgin?'

The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit
will come upon you,
and the power of the Most High
will surround you.

And the child to be born
will be holy;
and will be called
the Son of God.

And your relative Elizabeth, childless
in her old age, will also bear a son;
and is already in her sixth month,
for every promise of God
will be fulfilled.'

And Mary said, 'I am a servant of the Lord;
let it be so, as you have spoken.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 24 DECEMBER (after midday)
Christmas Eve, Midnight Mass

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 9.2,6-7a*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light.

On those who dwell
in the land of deep darkness -
on them, the light will shine.

For a child is born to us,
a son to rule over us,
and he shall be called
Wonderful Counsellor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
and Prince of Peace.

From the throne of David,
he will extend for ever
his kingdom of righteousness,
justice, and peace.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Philippians 4.4-8, 9b*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians.

Rejoice in the Lord -
always!

I say again, rejoice!

And let your gracious gentleness
be known
to everyone.

The Lord is near,
so do not worry about anything.

But in everything,
with prayer, and thanksgiving,
let your requests
be made known to God.

And the peace of God,
which surpasses
all understanding,
will guard your hearts
and your minds
in Christ Jesus.

Finally,
my brothers and sisters,
set your minds
on all that is true,
honourable,
just, and pure.

Set your minds
on all that is pleasing, and admirable,
and on all that is excellent,
and worthy of praise.

And the God of peace
will be with you.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 2.1,3-20*

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

An order went out, from the emperor,
that all the world
should be registered,
each in their own town.

Joseph, a descendant of David,
was engaged to Mary, who was expecting a child,
so they travelled together
to the city of David,
Bethlehem, in Judea.

While they were there,
the time came
for the child
to be born,
and Mary gave birth
to her firstborn, a son.

She wrapped the child in bands of cloth,
and laid him in a manger,
because there was no room for them
at the inn.

Out in the fields, there were shepherds,
keeping watch
through the night.

An angel of the Lord appeared to them,
and the glory of the Lord
shone around them,
and they were afraid.

The angel said, 'Do not be afraid.
I bring good news
of great joy
for all people.

Today, in the city of David,
there is born a Saviour,
the Messiah,
the Lord.

This will be the sign for you:
you will find the child
wrapped in bands of cloth,
and lying in a manger.'

A vast choir of angels appeared, proclaiming,
'Glory to God in the highest heaven!

Peace on earth,
and God's blessings on all people!'
The shepherds made their way quickly
to Bethlehem,
where they found Mary and Joseph,
and the child, lying in the manger.

When the shepherds made known
the message of the angels,
all who heard it
were amazed.

And Mary treasured all these words,
and pondered them in her heart.

And the shepherds returned,
glorifying and praising God
for all that they had
seen and heard.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

MONDAY 25 DECEMBER

Christmas Day

FIRST READING - Isaiah 52.7-10

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Those who keep watch
are shouting out
with joy.

For they see, on the mountains,
the messenger
approaching,
bringing good news
of salvation, and peace;
good news
of the triumph
of our God.

Join in their song,
O ruins of Jerusalem!

For all the world
will see the Lord
returning to Zion,
with mercy and strength,
declaring
that your freedom
has been won.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING - Hebrews 1.1-4

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

Long ago,
God spoke to our ancestors,
in many and various ways,
by the prophets,

but in these last days,
God has spoken to us
by a Son,

appointed by God
as inheritor of all things,
the reflection
of God's glory,
the exact imprint
of God's very being.

Present with God
at the creation of the universe,
and sustaining
all creation
by his powerful word,
he has reconciled us to God,
and is seated now,
higher even than the angels,
at the right hand
of God's Majesty
on high.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL - John 1.1-12,14

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

In the beginning
was the Word,
and the Word
was with God,
and the Word
was God.

The Word
was in the beginning
with God.

Through the Word,
all things
came into being.

And in the Word
was life -

the life
that was the light
of all people.

That light
now shines in the darkness,
and the darkness
has not
overcome it.

There was a man sent from God,
whose name was John.

John himself
was not the light,
but came
to bear witness
to the light,
so that all might believe.

The true light,
bringing light
to all,
was coming
into the world.

He was in the world -
the world that came into being through him -
and yet the world
did not know him.

He came to his own,
and his own
did not receive him.

But all who did
receive him -
all who believed in his name -
he called
to become
children of God.

The Word became flesh,
and dwelt amongst us.

And we have seen his glory -
the glory

of the Father's only Son,
full of grace and truth.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 31 DECEMBER

Saint John the Evangelist

FIRST READING – *Exodus 33.7–11a*

A reading from the book of Exodus.

Moses set up a tent, called the Tent of Meeting,
far outside the camp,
and anyone who sought the Lord
would go to it.

Whenever Moses himself went out to it,
all the people
would stand by their tents
and watch.

The pillar of cloud would descend,
and would stand
by the entrance
of the tent,
and the Lord
would speak with Moses there.

When they saw
the pillar of cloud,
standing at the entrance of
the Tent of Meeting,
all the people would bow down,
each of them at the entrance of their tent.

And the Lord
would speak
with Moses
there,
face to face,
as someone might speak
with a friend.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *1 John 3.1-2*

A reading from the first letter of John.

The love
that God the Father
has for us

is so great
that we are already
declared to be
children of God.

Those who do not know
the Father
neither see nor understand this.

My brothers and sisters,
already
we are children of God;

but there is more
that is still to be revealed,
of what we are yet to become;

for we trust
that when Christ appears in glory,
we will become
yet more fully
like him,

for we shall see him
face to face.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 21.19b–25*

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

Jesus said to Peter, 'Follow me.'

Peter turned,
and saw 'the disciple Jesus loved'
approaching them.

(This is the disciple who had been
next to Jesus,
at the supper,
and had asked, 'Lord, who is it
that is going to betray you?')

When Peter saw
this disciple
approaching,

Peter said to Jesus, 'Lord,
what about him?'

And Jesus said to Peter, 'If it is
my will
that he remains
until I return,
what is that to you?
You, follow me!'

So the rumour spread,
amongst the believers,
that this disciple
would not die.

Yet Jesus
did not say
that this disciple
would not die;

Jesus said, 'If
it is my will
that he remains
until I come,
what is that to you?'

This is the very disciple
now recording
all
these things,
and writing them;
so you can know
that this account
is true.

There are also
many other things
that Jesus did.

And if every one of them
were written down,
the whole world
could not contain
the books
that would be written.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 7 JANUARY

First Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING - *Isaiah 55.1-3,6-7*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Come, all who are thirsty;

come to the water and drink.

Come, all who are in poverty;

come for grain, and milk, and wine,
without money,
and without cost.

For you work,

and you spend,

but you find

neither food
nor fulfilment.

So listen now

to the word of the Lord,

and you will eat,

and be filled.

Come to me,

and hear my word,

that you may live,

says the Lord.

And the Lord

will make with you

an everlasting covenant.

Turn away

from your wicked ways,

and turn to the Lord,

for the Lord is ready to welcome you.

Turn away

from your plotting

for injustice,

and call upon the Lord,

for the Lord is near.

Return to the Lord your God,

for God will have mercy,

and freely forgive.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Ephesians 1.9-14*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

God's purpose is to bring

to unity, in Christ,

all things

in heaven

and on earth.

God chose us

to live to the praise of God's glory.

And whilst we

were the first

to set our hope on Christ,

you also

can now live

to the praise of God's glory,

for you have heard

the same message of truth,

the same gospel of salvation;

and you have been marked

with the same seal

of the promised

Holy Spirit, which is

God's pledge to us

that we are

God's own people.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 1.29-34*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

according to John.

John the Baptist saw Jesus

coming towards him,

and said, 'Here is

the Lamb of God:

the one who takes away

the sin of the world;

the one who comes after me,

but ranks ahead of me,

because he existed

before I was born.

When God sent me

to baptise

with water,

God said

that I would see

the Spirit descend

on the one who is to baptise

with the Holy Spirit.

I came baptising

with water

to make known to Israel

the one who is to baptise

with the Holy Spirit.

And now,

I have seen the Spirit

descending from heaven

like a dove,

and resting upon him.

And so I declare

that this is

the Son of God.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 14 JANUARY

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – 1 Samuel 3.1-10

A reading from the first book of Samuel.

The boy Samuel
was ministering to the Lord
in the temple,
under the guidance
of Eli, the high priest.
The word of the Lord
was rare in those days,
and visions from the Lord
were few.
Eli's eyesight
was failing.
And Samuel
did not yet
know the Lord,
for the word of the Lord
had not yet
been revealed to him.
One evening,
before the lamp of God had gone out,
Eli was lying down in his room,
and Samuel was lying down
in the temple of the Lord,
near the ark of God.
And the Lord called out: 'Samuel!'
Samuel said, 'Here I am!'
and ran to Eli, and said, 'Here I am,
for you called me.'
But Eli said, 'I did not call;
go and lie down.'
Samuel went, and lay down;
and the Lord called out
a second time, 'Samuel!'
Again, Samuel went to Eli,
and said, 'Here I am,
for you called me.'
But Eli said, 'My son, I did not call;
go and lie down.'
And the Lord called Samuel
a third time.
And again, Samuel went to Eli,
and said, 'Here I am,
for you called me.'
And now Eli understood
that the Lord
was calling the boy.
So Eli said to Samuel, 'Go, and lie down,
and if you hear the call again,
say, "Speak, Lord,
for your servant is listening."'”
So Samuel went
and lay down again,
and the Lord came, and stood there,
calling as before, 'Samuel!'
And Samuel said, 'Speak,
for your servant is listening.'
This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – 1 Corinthians 6.12,19-20

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

All things may be lawful, in Christ -
but not all things
are beneficial.
All things may be lawful -
but you should take care
not to become a slave
to anything.
You are no longer your own,
for you were bought, at a price,
to be a servant of God.
Your body is now
a temple of the Holy Spirit,
given by God, and dwelling within you.
Therefore glorify God
in your body.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 1.35-42

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

The next day,
John the Baptist
was standing
with two of his disciples
when Jesus passed by.
John said
to his two disciples, 'Look,
here is the Lamb of God!'
The two disciples
followed Jesus.
When Jesus turned
and saw them following him,
he said to them, 'What is it
that you are looking for?'
They asked Jesus, 'Teacher,
where are you staying?'
Jesus replied, 'Come and see.'
And they spent
the rest of that day
with Jesus.
One of the two
was Andrew.
Andrew went to find his brother Simon,
and said to him, 'We have found
the Messiah,
the Christ'.
And Simon went with Andrew
to the place where Jesus
was staying.
Jesus looked at Simon,
and said, 'You are Simon, son of John,
but you will be called
Peter, the Rock.'
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 21 JANUARY

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 62.1-4*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

For your sake, O Zion,
I will not keep silent;
and for your sake, O Jerusalem,
I will not rest, says the Lord,
until your righteousness
shines out like the dawn,
and your salvation
like a beacon in the night.
All kings, all nations,
will see your glory.
You will be a royal crown of beauty
in the hand
of the Lord your God.
And the Lord will give you
a new name.
You will no longer
be called “forsaken”.
And your land
will no longer
be called “desolate”.
You will be called
“the delight of the Lord”.
And your land
will be called
“the bride of the Lord”.
For the Lord
delights in you.
This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *1 Corinthians 9.19-23*

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

I am free, subject only
to the law of Christ.
But I have made myself a servant
to everyone,
that I might lead
as many as possible
to salvation.
To those who live under the law,
I became like one who lives
under the law,
so that I might win those who live
under the law.
To those who live outside the law,
I became like one who lives
outside the law,
so that I might win those who live
outside the law.
To the weak, I became weak,
so that I might win the weak.
I have become all things to all people,
all for the sake of the gospel,
that by all possible means
I might lead some to salvation.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 2.1-11*

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

There was a wedding, at Cana,
in Galilee.
The mother of Jesus was there;
and Jesus and his disciples
were also guests
at the wedding.
The wine ran out,
and Jesus' mother
came to Jesus,
and said, ‘They have
no wine.’
Jesus said to his mother, ‘What is that to you,
or to me? My time has not yet come.’
But his mother
said to the servants,
‘Do whatever he tells you.’
Jesus pointed
to the stone water-jars,
used for ceremonial washing.
There were six,
holding about
six hundred litres
in all.
Jesus told the servants
to fill the jars
with water.
And they filled them
to the brim.
Jesus said, ‘Now draw some out,
and take it
to the chief steward.’
They took some
to the chief steward,
and he tasted it.
And the water
had become wine.
The servants who had taken it
to the chief steward
knew where it had come from,
but the chief steward
did not know.
When the chief steward tasted it,
he called the bridegroom,
and said,
‘Everyone serves
the best wine first,
and the cheaper wine later,
when the guests
have had plenty to drink.
But you have kept
the best wine
until now.’
This was the first of the signs
by which Jesus
revealed his glory;
and his disciples
believed in him.
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 28 JANUARY

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – *Jonah 3.1-10*

A reading from the book of Jonah.

The word of the Lord

came to Jonah a second time,
saying, 'Go to the great city of Nineveh,
and declare there
the message that I have given you.'

Jonah set out, and went to Nineveh,
as the Lord had spoken.

Nineveh was a city
so large
that it would take three days
to walk across it.

Jonah entered the city,
going a day's walk,
announcing, 'Forty days more,
and Nineveh will be destroyed!'

The people
believed the word of God,
declared a fast,
and put on sackcloth -
all the people of Nineveh,
from the greatest to the least.

When news reached
the king of Nineveh,
the king also
put on sackcloth,
and ordered
that all
should join the fast,
and cry out to God in prayer,
and turn away
from their evil and violent ways.

And when God saw all that they did,
and how they turned
from their evil ways,

God resolved
not to bring about
the calamity
that had been declared
against them.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *1 Corinthians 9.24-27*

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

You know that, in a race,
all the runners compete,
but only one receives the prize.

So run this race as if to win!
Athletes work with discipline
for an earthly reward -
but we work for an eternal reward!

So run, and work, with direction, and purpose,
as I also continue to work
with discipline, like an athlete,
so that after teaching others,
I myself should not fail
to complete the race!

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 1.14-28*

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

After John the Baptist
was arrested,
Jesus came to Galilee,
proclaiming the good news of God,
saying, 'The time is fulfilled,
and the kingdom of God has come near;
repent, and believe the good news.'

As Jesus walked
by the Sea of Galilee,
he saw Simon, and his brother Andrew,
casting a fishing net
into the lake.

And Jesus said to them, 'Come, follow me,
and I will send you out
to fish for people.'

Immediately, they left their nets,
and followed him.

As Jesus went a little further,
he saw James and John,
the sons of Zebedee,
in their boat,
mending the nets.

Immediately,
Jesus called them.

And they left their father Zebedee
in the boat
with the hired workers,
and followed Jesus.

They went to Capernaum,
and when the sabbath came,
Jesus went into the synagogue, and taught.

All were amazed
at his teaching,
for unlike their scribes,
he taught with authority.

While they were there
in the synagogue,
a man with an unclean spirit came in,
and cried out, 'What are you doing here,
Jesus of Nazareth?

Have you come to destroy us?

I know who you are - the Holy One of God!'

But Jesus rebuked
the unclean spirit,
saying, 'Be silent, and come out of him!'

And the unclean spirit
first threw the man into convulsions,
then cried out, in a loud voice;
and then came out of him.

They were all astounded,
and asked one another,
'What is this new teaching,
with such authority?

Even the unclean spirits
obey him!'

And his fame spread
through the entire region
of Galilee.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 4 FEBRUARY

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 40.28-31*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The Lord
is the everlasting God,
the creator
of the ends of the earth,
with wisdom
beyond our understanding.
The Lord does not faint,
or grow weary,
but strengthens
the weak
and the powerless.
Even the young
may stumble and fall.
But those who trust in the Lord
will find their strength renewed.
They will rise up
with wings
like eagles.
They will run
and not be weary;
they will walk
and not faint.
This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *1 Corinthians 10.32-11.1*

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

Let everything you do,
and every choice you make,
be for the glory of God.
Give no offence to others,
whether Hebrews,
or Greeks,
or the church of God itself.
For we are following
the example of Christ
when we work
not for our own good,
but for the good of others,
and for their salvation.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 1.29-39*

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

Jesus went
with James and John
to the home of Simon and Andrew, where
Simon's mother-in-law
was in bed
with a fever.
Jesus went to her,
and took her hand.
She awoke,
and immediately, the fever left her;
and she was able to welcome them,
and even attend to them.
That evening,
around sunset,
the whole city came out,
gathering around the door,
bringing to Jesus
all who were sick
or oppressed by demons.
Jesus cured many who were sick
with various diseases,
and drove out many demons.
And Jesus
would not allow
the demons
to speak,
because
they knew who Jesus was.
Early the next morning,
while it was still fully dark,
Jesus went out
into the wilderness, alone.
And there he prayed.
Simon, and some of the other disciples,
went searching for him.
When they found him,
they said to him, 'Everyone is looking for you.'
Jesus said, 'Let us go on
to the neighbouring towns,
so that I may preach there also;
for that is what I came to do.'
And Jesus travelled
throughout the region of Galilee,
teaching in the synagogues,
and driving out demons.
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 11 FEBRUARY

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING - *Leviticus 13.2-3, 45-46; 14.2-4, 8a, 10*

A reading from the book of Leviticus.

When the priest
examines blemishes on the skin,
and finds them to be leprosy,
the person with the blemishes
will be declared
unclean,
and must
go to live
alone,
in a dwelling
outside the camp,
and must wear torn clothes,
and must leave their hair dishevelled,
and whilst going about,
must cover their mouth,
and cry out, 'Unclean, unclean.'
But if the person
is brought again to the priest,
and the priest finds
the disease
to be healed,
the person who has been
found to be healed
shall make an offering
of two turtle-doves,
with cedar-wood,
and crimson,
and herbs,
and shall bathe,
and cut their hair,
and wear clean clothes;
and a week later,
shall make
a thanksgiving offering
of a lamb.
This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *2 Corinthians 3.1b-6*

A reading from the second letter of Paul
to the Corinthians.

We do not need
letters of recommendation,
for you are our letter,
written on our hearts,
to be known and read by all.
You are
a letter from Christ,
commending our ministry,
written not with ink,
but with the Spirit
of the living God;
and not on stone tablets,
but on human hearts.
And in the same way,
we are confident before God, through Christ,
not because of any competence of our own,
but because God has called us, and equipped us,
to be ministers of a new covenant -
a covenant
not of the written law,
that kills,
but of the Spirit,
that gives life.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 1.40-45*

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

A man with leprosy
knelt before Jesus,
and begged him,
'If you choose,
you can make me clean.'
Moved with compassion,
Jesus reached out his hand,
and touched him;
and said to him,
'I do choose.
Be made clean!'
And immediately,
the leprosy left him.
Jesus said to him, 'Say nothing to anyone;
but go, show yourself to the priest,
and make the offering,
for your cleansing,
as Moses commanded.'
But instead,
the man who had been healed
went out and spoke openly
about what had happened.
And word spread,
so that Jesus could no longer
go into any town openly,
but stayed out in the country;
and people came to him
from every town and city.
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

WEDNESDAY 14 FEBRUARY

Ash Wednesday

FIRST READING - *Isaiah 58.1b,3b-9a*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The Lord says

to the people of Jacob:

I see your rebellion,

and I know your transgressions.

On the day of holy fasting and prayer,

you serve

your own interests,

you oppress your workers,

and you quarrel, and fight.

This is not the fasting

that will make your voice

heard on high.

If you deny yourself,

bow your head,

and lie down in sackcloth and ashes,

even this

is not the fasting

that I honour,

says the Lord.

The fast that I honour

is to remove

the bonds of injustice,

and to let the oppressed

go free.

The fast that I honour

is to share your bread

with the hungry,

to bring the homeless poor

into your house,

and not to hide away

from the needs

of those around you.

When this becomes your fast, then your light

and your healing will come,

your righteousness will lead you on,

and the glory of the Lord will protect you.

Then you will call, and the Lord will answer.

You will cry for help, and the Lord will hear.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *1 Timothy 6.6-12a*

A reading from the first letter of Paul to Timothy.

We brought nothing into the world,

and we take nothing out.

So if we have food, and clothing,

let us be content with that.

For true riches are to be found

in godliness

combined with contentment.

Those who long to be rich

in this world

fall into temptation, and are trapped

by many foolish and harmful desires

that plunge them

into ruin and destruction.

The love of worldly wealth

is the root

of all manner

of evil,

pulling people

away from the faith,

and repeatedly causing them

pain and distress.

So flee from all this,

and instead

seek righteousness, godliness,

faith, love,

patience, and gentleness.

Work always

to be strong in the faith,

holding fast to the eternal life

to which you are called.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL - *Matthew 23:37-39*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

according to Matthew.

Jesus said, 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,

the city that kills

the prophets,

and stones

the messengers sent to you!

How often

I have longed

to gather your children together,

as a hen

gathers her young

under her wings!

And yet you would not come!

And now,

I leave this temple

desolate.

And you will not see me again

until the day when you say,

"Blessed is the one who comes

in the name of the Lord."

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 18 FEBRUARY*First Sunday of Lent***FIRST READING** – *Genesis 9.8-15*

A reading from the book of Genesis.

God said to Noah, 'Today,

I make a covenant,
with you,
and with all
your descendants,
with the animals
and the birds,
with every living creature
that came out of the ark,
and with all the earth,
for all generations:
that never again
will all life
be destroyed
by the waters
of a flood.

I set the rainbow
in the clouds,
as a sign
of the covenant
that I make with you.

And when
the rainbow
appears
in the clouds,
I will remember
the covenant
that I make with you
this day.'

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *1 Peter 3.20-21*

A reading from the first letter of Peter.

In the times of disobedience,
in the days of Noah,
God showed great patience,
so that some might be saved,
"through the waters",
by the building
of an ark.

In the same way,
you are now saved
through the waters of baptism,
not as a removal
of dirt
from the body,
but as an appeal to God
for cleansing from sin,
and for salvation
through the resurrection
of Jesus Christ.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 1.9-15*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Mark.

In those days,
Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee,
and was baptised by John
in the river Jordan.

As Jesus was coming up out of the water,
he saw the heavens torn apart,
and the Spirit
descending on him
like a dove.

And a voice
came from heaven:
'You are my Son,
the Beloved;
with you
I am well pleased.'

And the Spirit
immediately drove him out
into the wilderness.

He was in the wilderness
forty days,
tempted by Satan.

And he was with the wild animals.

And the angels
waited on him.

After John
was arrested,
Jesus came to Galilee,
proclaiming
the good news of God,
saying, 'The time is fulfilled,
and the kingdom of God
has come near.

Repent,
and believe the good news.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 25 FEBRUARY

Second Sunday of Lent

FIRST READING – *Genesis 15.1,5-6*

A reading from the book of Genesis.

The word of the Lord
came to Abram
in a vision:

‘Do not be afraid, Abram.

I am your protector,
and your reward will be great.

Look to the sky.

Your descendants
will outnumber
the stars.’

And Abram trusted
in this word
from the Lord.

And this made him righteous
in the eyes of the Lord.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Romans 4.3,13,16*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

The scripture tells us
that it was Abraham’s
trust in God

that made Abraham
righteous
in the eyes of the Lord.

And so we see
that the promise God made
to Abraham and his descendants
came through
trust in God,
and not
through any law.

For God’s gracious promise
depends not on the law,
but on trust in God,
and on the grace of God.

This applies
both to those who follow
the demands of the law,
and to those who,
like Abraham,
trust in God
without the law;
and so we can say
that we are all
descendants of Abraham,
and Abraham
is the father of us all.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 9.2-9*

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

Jesus took with him

Peter, James, and John,
and led them up a high mountain
by themselves.

And he was transfigured before them.

His clothes became dazzling white.

And there, talking with Jesus,
appeared

Elijah, and Moses.

Peter said to Jesus, ‘Teacher,
it is good for us to be here.

Let us build shelters,
for you, for Moses, and for Elijah.’

He did not know what to say,
for they were afraid.

Then a cloud
appeared,
and covered them.

And a voice
spoke from the cloud,
saying, ‘This is my beloved Son.
Listen to him.’

And when they looked,
they saw only Jesus, alone.

As they were
coming down the mountain,
Jesus said, ‘Tell no one
what you have seen,
until the Son of Man
has risen from the dead.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 3 MARCH

Third Sunday of Lent

FIRST READING – *Exodus 20.1-17*

A reading from the book of Exodus.

I am the Lord your God. I brought you out
of the land of Egypt,
out of the house of slavery.
You shall have no other gods before me.
You shall not make for yourself any idol,
in the form of anything
that is in the sky above,
or the earth below, or the waters under the earth.
You shall not bow down to them
or worship them,
for I am the Lord your God,
and I grieve
at the rebellion
of those who reject me,
to the third and fourth generation;
but I show steadfast love
to a thousand generations
of those who honour me
and keep my commandments.
You shall not
take the name
of the Lord your God
in vain.
You shall remember the sabbath day,
and keep it holy.
Six days
you shall labour, and do all your work,
but the seventh day
is a sabbath to the Lord your God.
On the sabbath day,
you shall do no work.
All shall rest on the sabbath day: you,
your sons and daughters, your servants;
the foreigners living in your towns;
even your livestock;
for in six days, the Lord made
the heavens, the earth, the sea,
and all that is in them,
but rested on the seventh day;
therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day,
and made it holy.
You shall honour your father and mother,
that your days may be long
in the land
that the Lord your God
is giving you.
You shall not murder.
You shall not commit adultery.
You shall not steal.
You shall not bear false witness
against your neighbour.
You shall not envy
your neighbour's spouse.
You shall not envy
your neighbour's household, or home,
or anything that belongs to your neighbour.
This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *1 Corinthians 1.21-25*

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

The wisdom of the world
did not
lead people to God.
Instead, God has used
not the wisdom of the world,
but the foolishness
of our proclamation
to save
those who believe.
Greeks demand wisdom,
and Hebrews demand miraculous signs,
but we proclaim Christ crucified.
The proclamation of Christ crucified
is foolishness to Greeks,
and a stumbling-block to Hebrews.
But to those who are called -
both Hebrew and Greek -
the proclamation of Christ crucified
is both the wisdom of God,
and the power of God.
For God's foolishness
is wiser
than human wisdom;
just as God's weakness
is stronger
than human strength.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 2.13-22*

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

The Passover festival was near,
and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.
In the temple, he found traders, selling cattle,
sheep, and doves;
and money-changers, seated at tables.
Making a whip of cords,
he drove them all out of the temple -
and the sheep and the cattle with them.
He scattered the coins of the money-changers,
overturning their tables.
He said to those who were
selling doves, 'Get those out of here -
for you are making my Father's house
into a market-place!'
And his disciples remembered the scripture that says,
'Zeal for your house will consume me.'
The temple authorities said to Jesus, 'What sign
can you show us, that gives you the authority
to do this?'
Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple,
and in three days, I will raise it up.'
They said, 'This temple has been under construction
for forty-six years, and you will raise it in three days?'
But he was speaking of the temple of his body.
After he was raised from the dead,
his disciples remembered these words,
and they understood the scriptures,
and the words that Jesus had spoken.
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 10 MARCH

Fourth Sunday of Lent

FIRST READING – *2 Chronicles 36.14-23*

A reading from the Second Book of Chronicles.

The priests, and the people,
became unfaithful.

They followed the evil ways of other nations,
even in the house of the Lord, in Jerusalem.

But the Lord God, the God of their ancestors,
had compassion upon them,
and repeatedly

sent messengers amongst them.

But the people mocked
the messengers of God,
despising their words,
and scoffing at the prophets.

Finally, the displeasure of the Lord
was so great, that the Lord
brought up against them
the army of the king of Babylon.

The invading army
killed their youths with the sword,
even in the temple,
and had no compassion,
even on the weak or the elderly.

Both the temple and the palace
were burned to the ground,
and their treasures were taken away to Babylon;
and the city walls were broken down.

Those who escaped from the sword
were taken as prisoners to Babylon,
and were made to serve
the king of Babylon.

Then Jerusalem lay desolate
for seventy years,
fulfilling all the sabbaths it had missed,
in fulfilment of the word of the Lord
by the prophet Jeremiah;

until, in the first year
of the new
kingdom of Persia,

the Lord moved the heart
of Cyrus, the king of Persia,
to make this declaration:

'The Lord, the God of heaven,
has given me all the kingdoms of the earth,
and has appointed me to build, for the Lord,
a temple at Jerusalem.

Let all the Lord's people
return to Jerusalem,
and may the Lord your God be with you.'

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Ephesians 2.1-10*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

When we lived by the rules of this present world,
filled with the spirit of disobedience,
following the desires
only of the body and the senses,

we were dead
in trespass and sin.

But in great love and mercy,
God raised us up
to new life,

with Christ,
and in Christ,
and to heaven itself;
so that all may recognise,
now and for all time,
the infinite riches
of God's grace towards us
in Jesus Christ.

For it is by God's grace
that we have been saved,
through faith.

Our salvation is not our own doing,
as if it were some achievement,
of which we might boast.

No, our salvation is the gift of God, who has
re-made us,
in Christ Jesus,
for the good works
that have been prepared for us.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 3.16-21*

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

God so loved the world
that God gave
the only Son of God
into the world;

so that everyone
who believes
in the Son of God

will not be lost,
but will have eternal life.

For God sent the Son into the world
not as judge,
but as saviour;

and those who believe
in the Son of God
are no longer under judgement;

but those who do not believe
remain under judgement,
for the light has come into the world,
and they love darkness
more than light.

Because their deeds are evil,
they hide from the light,
out of fear

that their evil deeds
will be exposed.

But those whose deeds
are honest and true
come to the light,

and the light reveals
that God is in
the good deeds
that they do.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 17 MARCH

Fifth Sunday of Lent

FIRST READING – *Jeremiah 31.31-34*

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah.

The days are coming
when I will make a new covenant
with the house of Israel,
and the house of Judah,
says the Lord.

It will not be like
the covenant that I made
with their ancestors,
when I led them out of Egypt -
a covenant they have broken.

But this is
the new covenant
that I will make with them,
says the Lord:

I will put my law within them,
and I will write it on their hearts.

I will be their God,
and they will be my people;

and all
will know me,
from the greatest
to the least;

and I will forgive their iniquity,
and remember their sin no more.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Hebrews 5.7-10a*

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

In the days of his earthly life,
Jesus offered up prayers,
with loud cries, and tears,
to the one who was
able to rescue him
from death.

And his prayer was heard,
in his reverent submission
to the will of the Father.

Even as the Son,
he grew
in devotion
through all
he learned
and endured.

And when
he had
accomplished
and completed
all things,
he was declared by God
to be the eternal high priest,
and has become
the source
of eternal salvation
for all who trust in him.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 12.23-28a,31-32*

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

Jesus said,
‘The hour has come
for the Son of Man
to be glorified.

A grain of wheat
remains
a single grain,
unless it falls
to the earth
and dies;

but when
a grain of wheat
falls to the earth
and dies,
it produces
a great harvest.

Those who love
their life in this world
will lose it;

while those who hate
their life in this world
will gain
eternal life.

Those who would serve me
must follow me,
and will be with me;
and the Father
will honour them.

And now my soul is troubled,
and I would long to pray, “Father,
save me from this hour.”

But it is for this hour
that I came.

And so, I pray, “Father,
glorify your name.”

Now is the judgement
of this world;
now the ruler of this world
will be driven out.

And when I am lifted up from the earth,
I will draw all people to myself.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 24 MARCH

Palm Sunday

PALM PROCESSION – *Mark 11.1-2,7-10*

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

Jesus and the disciples
were approaching Jerusalem.

When they reached Bethany,
near the Mount of Olives,

Jesus gave instructions
to two of his disciples

to go on ahead
into the village,

and to bring back a foal
that they would find there.

They brought the foal to Jesus,
and made a saddle from their cloaks,
and Jesus sat on it.

Many people now
spread their cloaks on the road,
and others spread leaves
that they had cut in the fields.

Those going ahead of Jesus,
and those following behind,
shouted out, 'Hosanna!

Blessed
is the one who comes
in the name of the Lord!

Blessed
is the coming kingdom
of our ancestor David!

Hosanna
in the highest heaven!

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

MAIN LITURGY

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 50.4-8a*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The Lord God
has taught me wisdom,
that I may speak words of comfort
to those who are weary.

Morning by morning,
the Lord God awakens me,
that I may learn wisdom
as a servant of the Lord.

When I face persecution and violence,
I do not hide my face, or turn away,
for the Lord God is my helper,
and I will not
be defeated or ashamed.

I set my face like flint,
for my protector,
the one who brings justice,
is near.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Philippians 2.5-11*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians.

Let Christ Jesus

be your example.

He did not regard
his equality with God
as something to be exploited,
but emptied himself,
taking the form of a servant.

Born in human form,
he humbled himself,
in faithful obedience,
even to death on the cross.

And now, God has highly exalted him,
and has given him the name
that is above every name,
so that at the name of Jesus,
all shall bow down,
in heaven, on earth, and under the earth,
and declare that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory
of God the Father.

This is the word of the Lord.

PASSION – *Mark 14.1 - 15.47*

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Mark.

The chief priests and the scribes
were looking for a way
to arrest Jesus,
and execute him.

But they feared a riot
if they made the arrest
in a public place,
or during the Festival of the Passover,
which was only two days away.

Jesus was at Bethany, outside Jerusalem,
in the house of Simon the leper.

As Jesus sat at the table to eat,
a woman came,
with a carved
alabaster jar
of valuable
perfumed
ointment.

She broke open the jar,
and poured out the ointment
on Jesus' head.

Some of those present
spoke angrily to her,
saying that the ointment
had been wasted,
when it could have been sold,
for a whole year's wages,
and the money
given to the poor.

But Jesus said, 'Let her alone.
She has done
a beautiful thing for me.
You always
have the poor with you,
and you can help them
whenever you wish;
but you will not always have me.
She has done what she could;
she has anointed my body early,
for burial.
And she will be remembered
throughout the world
for her good deed,
wherever the good news is proclaimed.'

Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve,
then went to the chief priests,
offering to betray Jesus to them.

The chief priests were glad
to receive this offer,
and promised Judas payment.

And Judas began to look
for an opportunity
to betray Jesus.

On the first day
of the festival, the day when
the Passover lamb is sacrificed,
the disciples asked Jesus where they should
make preparations
for the Passover meal.

Jesus sent two of the disciples
into the city,
saying that they would see someone
carrying a jar of water into a house;
they should ask the owner of that house
to show them a guest room
where their teacher, and his disciples,
could eat the Passover meal;
they would be shown
a large upstairs room, furnished and ready,
and they should make preparations there.
The disciples went to the city,
and found everything as Jesus had told them;
and they prepared the Passover meal.

When it was evening,
Jesus and the twelve
took their places at the table.
While they were eating,
Jesus said, 'Truly I tell you,
one of you will betray me,
one of you here, eating with me.'
The disciples were distressed,
and began to say to him,
one after another, 'Surely, not I?'
Jesus said to them, 'It is one of the twelve,
one who is eating
at this table.
The Son of Man will go
as it is written.
And for the one who betrays him,
it would have been better
not to have been born.'

While they were eating,
Jesus took bread,
and after giving thanks,
he broke it,
and gave it to his disciples,
saying, 'Take, and eat;
this is my body.'
Then he took the cup,
and after giving thanks,
he gave it to them,
and they all drank from it.
And he said, 'This is my blood, of the covenant,
which is poured out for many.
And I will not drink
the fruit of the vine again
until I drink it
in the kingdom of God.'

When they had sung a hymn,
they went out
to the Mount of Olives.
There, Jesus said to them, 'You will all abandon me,
as it is written: "I will strike the shepherd,
and the sheep will be scattered."
But after I am raised up,
I will go ahead of you
to Galilee.'
Peter said to Jesus, 'Even if all others
abandon you,
I will not.'
Jesus said to Peter, 'This very night,
before the cock crows twice,
you will deny me three times.'
But Peter insisted all the more, 'Even if I must
die with you, I will not deny you.'
And they all
said the same.

They went to a place
called Gethsemane.
And Jesus said
to his disciples, 'Stay here while I pray.'
Jesus took with him
Peter, James, and John.
And he became troubled,
and distressed,
saying to them, 'My soul
is consumed with grief, to the point of death.
Stay here, and keep watch.'
And going a little further,
he fell to the ground,
and prayed that, if it were possible,
the hour might pass from him;
saying 'Abba, Father,
for you
all things are possible;
remove this cup from me;
yet not my will, but yours, be done.'
Jesus returned
to Peter, James, and John,
and found them sleeping.
Jesus said to Peter, 'Could you not
keep awake one hour?
Stay awake, and pray,
that you may not
come into the time of trial;
for the spirit indeed is willing,
but the flesh is weak.'
Jesus left them again,
and prayed once more,
saying the same words.
And he returned to them again,
and found them sleeping,
for their eyes were heavy;
and they did not know
what to say to him.
And Jesus returned a third time,
and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping,
and taking your rest?
Enough. The hour has come,
and the Son of Man is betrayed
into the hands of sinners.
Let us be going;
see, my betrayer is at hand.'

While Jesus
was still speaking,
Judas, one of the twelve, arrived,
with a crowd,
with swords and clubs,
from the chief priests,
the scribes, and the elders.
Judas, the betrayer,
had arranged a signal with them,
saying, 'I will greet him
with a kiss.
Then you can arrest him,
and lead him away, under guard.'
So Judas
now approached Jesus,
and said, 'Teacher,'
and greeted him
with a kiss.
And they took hold of Jesus,
and arrested him.
Someone took a sword,
and struck
the servant of the high priest,
cutting off his ear.
Jesus said, 'Day after day
I was in your temple,
teaching,
and you did not
arrest me.
And now you come out
with swords and clubs
to arrest me
like an outlaw.
But let the scriptures
be fulfilled.'
All the disciples
now deserted Jesus,
and fled.
One young man amongst them
had been wearing a single garment
of linen cloth.
Those who had arrested Jesus
caught hold of it,
as they tried to arrest him,
and he fled
without it.

Those who had arrested Jesus
took him
to the high priest.
The elders, the scribes,
and the chief priests,
had all assembled.
Peter had followed
at a distance,
into the courtyard
of the high priest;
and he was sitting with the guards,
warming himself
at the fire.
The chief priests, and the whole council,
were looking for testimony against Jesus,
to put him to death;
but they found none.
Many gave false testimony against Jesus,
but their testimony did not agree.
Some stood up,
and gave false testimony against him,
saying, 'We heard him say,
"I will destroy this temple,
that is made by human hands,
and in three days, I will build another,
not made by human hands."'”
But even on this point,
their testimony did not agree.
Then the high priest stood,
and demanded of Jesus, 'How do you respond
to what they are saying?
Have you no answer?'
But Jesus was silent,
making no reply.
The high priest asked him, 'Are you the Messiah,
the Son of the Holy One?'
Jesus said, 'I am; and you will see
the Son of Man, seated
at the right hand of power, and coming
with the clouds of heaven.'
Then the high priest tore his robes,
and said, 'We need no further witnesses.
You have heard his blasphemy.
What is your verdict?'
And they all condemned him
as deserving death.
Some spat on him,
blindfolded him,
beat him,
and said to him, 'Speak like a prophet!'
And the guards also
took him and beat him.

One of the women who worked for the high priest
walked past
where Peter was keeping warm
in the courtyard below.
She looked closely at Peter,
then said to him, 'You were with
Jesus of Nazareth.'
But Peter denied it,
saying, 'I do not know
what you mean.'
And he moved
to the outer courtyard.
And the cock crowed.
The woman saw Peter again,
and said to those who were standing there,
'This man is one of them.'
Again, Peter denied it.
A short time later,
those who were standing there
said to Peter, 'Surely you are with him,
for you are a Galilean.'
Peter began to curse,
and swore with an oath,
'I do not know this man.'
And at that very moment,
the cock crowed
a second time.
And Peter remembered
that Jesus had said to him,
'Before the cock crows twice,
you will deny me three times.'
And Peter broke down and wept.

As soon as it was morning,
the chief priests consulted
with the elders, and the scribes,
and the whole council.
Then they bound Jesus, led him away,
and handed him over to Pilate.

Pilate asked Jesus, 'Are you
the King of the Jews?'
Jesus replied, 'You have said it.'
Then the chief priests made
many accusations
against Jesus.
Pilate asked Jesus, 'Have you no answer?
See how many charges
they bring against you.'
But Jesus made no further reply.

Now it had become a custom
that at the festival
Pilate would release a prisoner,
whichever one
the people demanded.

Amongst the prisoners
was Barabbas;
he had committed a murder,
as one of the rebels
during an insurrection.

The crowd began to ask Pilate
to release a prisoner,
in keeping with his custom.

Pilate had now recognised
that it was out of envy
that the chief priests
had handed Jesus over to him.

So Pilate said to the crowd, 'Shall I release for you
the King of the Jews?'

But the chief priests stirred up the crowd
to ask Pilate to release Barabbas instead.

Pilate addressed the crowd again,
saying, 'What then
shall I do
with the one you call
the King of the Jews?'

And they shouted back, 'Crucify him!'

Pilate asked them, 'Why,
what evil has he done?'

But they shouted all the more, 'Crucify him!'

So to appease the crowd,
Pilate released Barabbas.

And after
having Jesus flogged,
Pilate handed Jesus over
to be crucified.

The soldiers
led Jesus into the courtyard,
and called together
the whole guard.

They twisted some thorns
into a crown,
and put it on him.

They put him
in a purple cloak,
and began to salute him, saying,
'Hail, King of the Jews!'

They struck his head with a reed,
spat upon him,
and knelt down, as if
in homage to him.

And after they had mocked him,
they removed the purple cloak from him,
put his own clothes on him,
and led him out
to crucify him.

Simon, from north Africa,
the father of Alexander and Rufus,
was coming in from the country;
and they took him,
and made him carry the cross.

They brought Jesus
to the place called Golgotha,
The Place of the Skull.
They offered him wine, mixed with myrrh;
but he did not take it.
And after crucifying him,
they divided his clothes between them,
casting lots
to decide what each should take.

It was nine o'clock in the morning
when they crucified him.

The inscription
of the charge against him
read, 'The King of the Jews.'

And with him,
they crucified two thieves,
one on his right, and one on his left.

Those who passed by
mocked him,
shaking their heads,
and saying, 'You said you could
destroy the temple
and build it in three days;
so save yourself;
come down from the cross.'

The chief priests and the scribes
also mocked him
amongst themselves,
saying, 'He saved others,
but he cannot save himself!
If he is the Messiah, the King of Israel,
let him come down from the cross,
and we will believe in him.'
And those who were crucified with him
also taunted him.

At midday,
darkness came over the whole land
for three hours.
Then Jesus cried out,
with a loud voice,
'My God, my God,
why have you forsaken me?'
Jesus cried out in Aramaic,
addressing God as 'Eli'.
Some of the bystanders
thought he was calling
for Elijah.
One of them brought a sponge,
filled it with sour wine,
put it on a stick,
and held it up for Jesus to drink,
saying, 'Wait,
let us see
whether Elijah
will come to save him.'
Then Jesus
let out
a loud cry;
and breathed his last.
And the curtain of the temple
was torn in two.
When the centurion, who stood facing Jesus,
saw that in this way,
he breathed his last,
he said, 'Truly this was
the Son of God.'

Amongst the women, watching from a distance,
were Mary Magdalene, and
Salome, and
Mary the mother of Joseph and the younger James.
They had followed
and supported Jesus
in Galilee.
And many other women, who had
travelled with him to Jerusalem,
were also there.

It was the day of Preparation,
that is, the day before the sabbath.
Joseph of Arimathea
was a respected member of the council,
who was, himself,
waiting expectantly
for the coming of the kingdom of God.
When evening came,
he found the courage
to go to Pilate, to ask
for the body of Jesus.
Pilate had not expected
that Jesus would already be dead;
but when Pilate had confirmed,
with a centurion,
that Jesus had indeed
been dead for some time,
Pilate granted the body
to Joseph,
as requested.
Then Joseph
bought
some linen cloth,
took down the body,
wrapped it in the cloth,
and laid it in a tomb
that had been carved out
from the rock.
Then he rolled a stone
across the entrance to the tomb.
Mary Magdalene,
and Mary the mother of Joseph,
saw where the body was laid.

The Passion of the Lord.

THURSDAY 28 MARCH

Maundy Thursday

FIRST READING – *Micah 6.6-8*

A reading from the book of the prophet Micah.

What shall I bring, as an offering, to the Lord,
as I bow down

before God most high?

Shall I bring burnt-offerings,

calves a year old,
thousands of rams,
rivers of oil,

or even my firstborn,

the fruit of my body,

for the transgressions of my soul?

No, for the offering

the Lord requires of us

is this:

to do justice,

to love kindness,

and to walk humbly

with our God.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Romans 12.1-2,9-20a,21*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

I appeal to you, brothers and sisters,

as your response

to God's great mercy,

to present your bodies

as a living sacrifice,

holy and acceptable to God.

Do not be conformed

to the ways

of this world,

but be transformed,

by the renewing of your minds,

towards

the perfect

will of God.

Let your love

be genuine.

Reject all that is evil,

and cling to all that is good.

With ever-greater devotion,

honour one another,

and serve the Lord.

Rejoice in faith,

be patient in suffering,

and persevere in prayer.

Support each other in need,

and offer care to everyone.

Bless those who persecute you;

bless them, and do not curse them.

Rejoice with those who rejoice,

and weep with those who weep.

Live in harmony with one another;

and find your place amongst the humble,

not amongst the arrogant.

Do not repay anyone evil for evil,

but always do what is right

in the sight of all.

Do all that you can

to live at peace

with everyone.

When you are wronged,

do not seek revenge.

Instead, leave room

for the judgement of God.

For the scripture says, 'Retribution is mine;

I will repay, says the Lord.'

So, as the scripture

also says,

if your enemies are hungry, feed them;

if they are thirsty, give them something to drink.

Do not be overcome

by evil,

but overcome evil

with good.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 13.4-9,12-16a, 34-35*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

according to John.

During the supper,

Jesus left the table,

took off his outer robe,

and tied a towel around his waist.

Then he poured water into a basin,

and began to wash the disciples' feet,

and to wipe them with the towel.

He came to Simon Peter, who said, 'Lord,

surely, I cannot let you

wash my feet.'

Jesus said, 'Soon you will understand

that I must wash you clean

if you are to be

my disciple.'

Simon Peter said, 'Then Lord, wash

not only my feet,

but my hands

and my head also!'

After Jesus had washed their feet,

he put on his robe,

returned to the table,

and said to them:

'Do you understand what I have done for you?

You call me Teacher and Lord;

and as your Lord and Teacher,

I have set you an example.

You should do for one another

what I have done for you,

for no servant

is greater than their master.

And I give you this new commandment:

as I have loved you,

so you

must love

one another.

By this, everyone will know

that you are my disciples:

if you have love

for one another.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

FRIDAY 29 MARCH

Good Friday

FIRST READING – Isaiah 53.3-5

He was despised
and rejected.
He knew anguish
and pain.
We counted him as worthless,
as struck down
by God.
We turned our faces
from him.
Yet truly
he bore our anguish,
and carried our pain.
He was wounded
for our transgressions,
and crushed
for our iniquities.
He bore the punishment
that makes us whole.
And by his wounds,
we are healed.

SECOND READING – Hebrews 4.14-16; 5.7-10a

We have
a great high priest, who has
ascended
into heaven,
Jesus, the Son of God.
And he is able to sympathise
with our weakness,
for he himself
has been tested,
in every way, as we are -
yet without sin.
So let us trust in him,
and approach the throne of grace
with confidence,
that we may receive
mercy,
and find
grace to help
in time of need.
In the days of his earthly life,
Jesus offered up prayers,
with loud cries, and tears,
to the one who was
able to rescue him
from death.
And his prayer was heard,
in his reverent submission
to the will of the Father.
Even as the Son,
he grew
in devotion
through all
he learned and endured.
And when he had
accomplished
and
completed
all things,
he was declared by God
to be the eternal high priest,
and has become
the source
of eternal salvation
for all who trust in him.

*Good Friday Passion Readings
begin on the next page*

FRIDAY 29 MARCH

Good Friday Passion Reading Part 1

John 18:1-27

Jesus went
with his disciples
to a garden
on the far side
of the Kidron valley.
Judas
also knew the place,
because Jesus
would often meet there
with his disciples.
So Judas led the soldiers and the temple guards there,
with weapons and torches.
Jesus, knowing what was happening,
stepped forward, and asked them, 'Who is it
that you are looking for?'
They answered, 'Jesus of Nazareth.'
Jesus said, 'I am he.'
And they stepped back
and fell to the ground.
Jesus asked them again, 'Who is it
that you are looking for?'
And again they said, 'Jesus of Nazareth.'
Jesus replied, 'I say again, I am he.
Now let these others go.'
In this way,
he fulfilled the words
he had earlier
spoken in prayer:
'I have protected those
you entrusted to me.'
Simon Peter
now drew his sword,
and struck
the servant
of the high priest,
cutting off his right ear.
Jesus said, 'Put your sword away,
for I must surely drink
from the cup
that the Father
has given me.'
Then the soldiers
and the temple guards
arrested Jesus,
and bound him.
They took him first to Annas,
the father-in-law
of Caiaphas,
the high priest that year.
Caiaphas was the one who had said
that it was better
to have one person die
for the people.

Simon Peter,
and another disciple,
followed Jesus.
The other disciple
was known
to the high priest,
and was able to follow Jesus
all the way into the courtyard.
But Peter was left standing outside the gate,
until the other disciple
went out
and spoke to the woman who was
guarding the gate.
The woman said to Peter, 'Are you also
one of his disciples?'
Peter said, 'I am not.'
The servants and temple guards
had made a charcoal fire
in the courtyard,
and they were standing around it
to keep warm.
Peter went
and stood with them.
Inside, they were questioning Jesus
about his disciples
and his teaching.
Jesus said, 'I have always spoken openly.
I have taught
in the synagogue,
and in the temple,
where people gather.
I have said nothing in secret.
Why ask me,
when you can ask
those who heard me?'
One of the temple guards
struck Jesus on the face,
saying, 'That is not
how you answer
the high priest.'
Jesus said, 'If what I have said
is untrue, then say so;
but if it is true, why strike me?'
Annas now sent Jesus, bound,
to Caiaphas the high priest.
Simon Peter
was still standing
with the temple guards,
by the charcoal fire,
in the courtyard.
Those who were standing there
asked Peter, 'Are you also
one of his disciples?'
Peter again denied it,
saying, 'I am not.'
One of the servants of the high priest
(a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off)
said to Peter, 'Did I not
see you with him, in the garden?'
Again Peter denied it;
and at that very moment,
the cock crowed.

FRIDAY 29 MARCH

Good Friday Passion Reading Part 2

John 18:28 - 19:16

At first light, they took Jesus
from the court of
Caiaphas, the high priest,
to the headquarters of
Pilate, the Roman governor.
But they did not go in,
as that would have been
a ritual defilement, preventing them
from eating the Passover.
So Pilate went out to them,
and asked, 'What charges do you bring
against this man?'
They answered, 'If he were not
an offender, we would not have
brought him to you.'
Pilate said, 'Take him yourselves,
and judge him by your own law.'
They replied, 'It is not lawful for us
to put anyone to death.'
Pilate went back inside his headquarters.
There, he summoned Jesus,
and asked him, 'Are you
the king of the Jews?'
Jesus said, 'Do you ask this for yourself,
or as something that others have said?'
Pilate replied, 'I am a Roman, not a Jew.
Your own people
and their chief priests
have handed you over to me.
What have you done?'
Jesus said, 'My kingdom is not
of this world,
or I would have guards,
fighting to protect me.
My kingdom is not here.'
Pilate said, 'So you are a king!'
Jesus said, 'Those are your words.
I was born, and I came into the world,
to bear witness to the truth.
Everyone who seeks the truth
hears my voice.'
Pilate said, 'And what is truth?'
Pilate then returned
to those who were waiting outside,
and said, 'I find no case against him.
But you have a custom
that I release a prisoner for you
at Passover.
Do you want me to release to you
the king of the Jews?'
And they shouted, 'Not him,
but Barabbas!'
And Barabbas
was a common criminal.

Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged.
The soldiers made a crown, out of thorns,
and put it on his head;
and they dressed him
in a purple robe.
They came up to him, saying,
'Hail, King of the Jews!'
and struck him on the face.
Pilate returned to those who were waiting outside,
and said, 'Look, I am bringing him out to you
to let you know
that I find no case against him.'
Jesus came out,
wearing the crown of thorns
and the purple robe.
Pilate said, 'Behold the man!'
As soon as the chief priests, and the temple guards,
saw him,
they shouted, 'Crucify!'
Pilate said, 'Take him yourselves and crucify him.
I find no case against him.'
They said, 'By our law, he must die,
for he claims to be
the Son of God.'
When Pilate heard this,
he was greatly concerned.
He entered his headquarters again,
and asked Jesus, 'Where are you from?'
But Jesus gave no answer.
Pilate said, 'Do you refuse to speak to me?
Do you not see
that I have the power to release you,
or to crucify you?'
Jesus said, 'You would have had
no power over me,
had it not been given to you.
The one who handed me over to you
is guilty of a greater sin.'
On hearing this, Pilate again
sought to release Jesus,
but the chief priests
and the temple guards
said, 'If you release him, you are no friend
of the emperor,
for he sets himself against the emperor,
by calling himself a king.'
Pilate took Jesus outside,
and sat on the judgement seat,
at the stone pavement.
It was about midday
on the day of preparation
for the Passover.
Pilate said, 'Here is your king!'
They cried out, 'Away with him!
Crucify him!'
Pilate asked them, 'Shall I
crucify your king?'
They answered, 'We have no king
but the emperor!'
And Pilate handed Jesus over to them,
and they led him away
to be crucified.

FRIDAY 29 MARCH

Good Friday Passion Reading Part 3

John 19:17-end

With Jesus carrying his own cross,
they led him out
to The Place of the Skull
(which in Hebrew is Golgotha).
There they crucified him,
between two others,
one on his right, and one on his left.
Pilate had an inscription
placed on the cross: 'Jesus of Nazareth,
the King of the Jews.'
Many people were able to read this,
as the place of the crucifixion
was near the city,
and the sign was written
in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew.
The chief priests complained to Pilate,
insisting that the inscription
should not be
'The King of the Jews',
but
'This man claimed to be
the King of the Jews'.
But Pilate said, 'What I have written,
I have written.'
The soldiers who crucified Jesus
divided his clothes
between them.
But his tunic was woven as a single piece,
so rather than tear it,
they cast lots for it.
As it says in the psalm, 'They divided my garments
amongst themselves,
and for my clothing,
they cast lots.'
Standing by the cross of Jesus
were his mother,
and his mother's sister,
Mary the wife of Clopas,
and Mary Magdalene.
When Jesus saw the beloved disciple
standing beside his mother,
Jesus said to his mother, 'Here is your son',
and to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.'
And from that time on,
the disciple took her into his own home.
Knowing that everything was now completed,
and in order to fulfil the scripture,
Jesus said, 'I am thirsty.'
From a jar that was standing there,
they filled a sponge with sour wine,
fixed it
on a branch of hyssop,
and lifted it to his mouth.
When Jesus had received it,
he said, 'It is finished,'
And he bowed his head,
and gave up his spirit.

The temple authorities
did not want the crucifixions
continuing into the sabbath,
so they asked Pilate to order
that the legs of the crucified
be broken,
and the bodies removed.
The soldiers came
and broke the legs
of the two who had been crucified
alongside Jesus.
But when they came to Jesus,
seeing that he was already dead,
they did not break his legs,
but pierced his side with a spear;
and blood and water
flowed out.
This account is given
by one who
witnessed these things,
so that you may know it to be true.
And so the scriptures were fulfilled:
'Not one of his bones shall be broken,'
and, 'They will look upon
the one they have pierced.'
After all these things
had taken place,
Joseph of Arimathea
sought and received
from Pilate
permission to take away
the body of Jesus.
Joseph was a disciple of Jesus,
but secretly, for fear
of the religious authorities.
Nicodemus, who had first come to Jesus
by night,
brought linen cloths,
and ointment, with myrrh, and aloe.
and together
they anointed and wrapped
the body of Jesus
for burial.
In a garden,
close to the place of crucifixion,
there was a new tomb,
in which no one
had ever been laid.
And as the sabbath
was soon to begin,
and the tomb was nearby,
they laid Jesus there.

SUNDAY 31 MARCH

Easter Day

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 25.6-9*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

On this holy mountain, the Lord God

will prepare for all people
a feast of rich food
and fine wine.

The Lord will take away
the cloud of darkness
that hangs over peoples and nations.

The Lord God
will bring to an end
the humiliation of the people,

will wipe away
the tears from all faces,
and will destroy
the power of death
for ever.

And the people will say, 'This is the day
of the Lord our God.

Let us rejoice,
for we trusted in God,
and the day
of our salvation
has come.'

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *1 Corinthians 15.1-10a*

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

Let me remind you again,
my brothers and sisters,
of the good news
that you received, which is now
your firm foundation,
and in which you are saved:

that Christ died for our sins, and was buried;
and that he was raised on the third day -
and all this

in fulfilment of the scriptures.

After he was raised from the dead,

he appeared to Peter,
then to the twelve,
then to more than
five hundred brothers and sisters
at one time.

Then he appeared to James;
then to all the apostles.

And last of all,
he appeared also to me,
as to one
untimely born,
unfit to be called
even the least of the apostles,

because I persecuted
the church of God.

But by the grace of God,
I am what I am.

And God's grace towards me
has not been in vain.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 20.1-18*

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

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark,
Mary Magdalene came to the tomb, and saw
that the stone
had been removed.

She hurried back to Simon Peter,
and the disciple Jesus loved, and said,
'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb,
and we do not know
where they have laid him.'

Peter and the other disciple
set off running
towards the tomb.

The other disciple outran Peter,
reaching the tomb first.

Bending down to look in,
he could see the linen wrappings, lying there,
but did not go in.

Then Simon Peter came, following him,
and went into the tomb.

He saw the linen wrappings,
and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head
rolled up separately, in a place by itself.

Then the other disciple also went in,
and saw, and believed;
(for until this point,
they had not understood the scripture,
that he must rise from the dead).

When these two disciples returned to their homes,
Mary stayed, weeping, outside the tomb.

As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb;
and she saw two angels, in white robes,
sitting one at the head, and one at the feet,
of where the body of Jesus had been.

The angels said to Mary, 'Why are you weeping?'
Mary said, 'They have taken away my Lord,
and I do not know where they have laid him.'

When she had said this, she turned around,
and saw Jesus standing there,
but she did not know
that it was Jesus.

Jesus asked her, 'Why are you weeping? Who is it
that you are looking for?'

Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him,
'Sir, if you have carried him away,
tell me where you have laid him,
and I will take him away.'

Jesus said to her, 'Mary!'

Mary turned, and said to him, 'Teacher!'

Jesus said, 'Do not hold on to me,
for I have not yet ascended to the Father.
But go, and tell my brothers
that I am ascending
to my Father and your Father,
to my God and your God.

Mary Magdalene went
and said to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord';
and she told them the words
the Lord had spoken to her.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 7 APRIL

Second Sunday of Easter

FIRST READING – Acts 8.26-38

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

An angel of the Lord
said to Philip, 'Get up,
and go towards the south,
on the wilderness road
that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.'

Meanwhile, the chief finance minister
of Ethiopia, who had been to Jerusalem
to worship, was now returning home
in his chariot
by that same road.

As a servant of the Queen of Ethiopia,
he was both Ethiopian,
and a eunuch of the court.

The Spirit prompted Philip
to walk alongside the chariot, where
Philip could hear him
reading from the prophet Isaiah.

Philip asked him
whether he understood
what he was reading.

He said, 'How can I understand,
unless someone guides me?'

And he invited Philip to sit with him.

He was reading the passage from Isaiah
which says: "Like a lamb,
he was led to the slaughter.

And like a sheep,
silent before its shearer,
he does not open his mouth.

In his humiliation,
justice was denied him.

Who can speak of his legacy,
now his life is taken away?"

He asked Philip, 'Is Isaiah
speaking about himself,
or someone else?'

And beginning with this scripture,
Philip told him
the good news of Jesus.

As they continued
along the road, they came to some water;
and the court official said, 'Look, here is water!
Is there any reason why I should not
be baptised?'

He ordered the chariot to stop,
and they both went down
into the water, and Philip baptised him there.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – 1 John 1.1-5

A reading from the first letter of John.

We write to you, with great joy,
concerning the eternal Word of Life,
which existed, from the beginning, with the Father,
and which we have now heard,
and seen with our eyes,
and touched with our hands.

We write to you, so that you may be
in fellowship with us,
and indeed with the Father,
and with his Son Jesus Christ.
And this is the message
that we have received,
and now proclaim to you:
that God is light; and in God,
there is no shadow or darkness at all.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 20.19-31

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

The disciples met together
on the evening
of the first day of the week,
with the doors locked,
because they were afraid.

And Jesus came, and stood amongst them,
and said, 'Peace be with you.'

He showed them his hands,
and his side.

And the disciples were filled with joy
at seeing the Lord.

Jesus said to them, 'Peace be with you.

As the Father has sent me, so I send you.'

Then he breathed on them,
saying, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'

And he said to them, 'Whatever you forgive
is forgiven, and whatever you retain remains.'

Now one of the twelve, Thomas (called the Twin),
was not with them
when Jesus came.

When the other disciples told Thomas
that they had seen the Lord,

Thomas said to them, 'Unless I see and touch
the marks of the nails in his hands,
and put my hand in his side,
I will not believe.'

A week later, Thomas was with the disciples
when they gathered.

And again, though the doors were locked,
Jesus came, and stood amongst them,
and said, 'Peace be with you.'

Jesus said to Thomas, 'See and touch my hands,
and place your hand in my side.

Do not doubt, but believe.'

Thomas replied, 'My Lord, and my God!'

Jesus said to Thomas, 'Have you believed
because you have seen me?'

Blessed are those who do not see,
and yet believe.'

Jesus did many other signs,

in the presence of his disciples,
which are not recorded in this book.

But these are written

that you may believe

that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God,
and through believing,

may have life in his name.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 14 APRIL*Third Sunday of Easter***FIRST READING – Acts 10.9-23**

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

At about midday,

Peter went up on the roof
to pray.He became hungry,
and while a meal
was being prepared,
he fell into a trance.He saw the heavens opened,
and something like a large sheet
coming down, being lowered to the ground
by its four corners.In the sheet,
there were all kinds of
animals, reptiles, and birds.Then he heard a voice saying, 'Peter, get up.
Kill, and eat.'But Peter said, 'Surely not, Lord; for I have
never eaten
anything profane or unclean.'The voice replied, 'Whatever God declares clean,
you should not call profane.'This happened three times; then the vision
was suddenly
taken back up
into heaven.Peter was still wondering what this could mean,
when three men arrived,
having been sent
by the centurion, Cornelius.They were standing by the gate,
asking whether Simon Peter was staying there.Peter was still thinking about the vision,
but the Spirit said to him, 'These men
are searching for you. You are to go with them,
without hesitation, for I have sent them to you.'So Peter went down to meet them,
saying, 'I am Simon Peter. What brings you here?'They answered, 'The centurion Cornelius
is a righteous man, who honours God,
and is respected by the whole Hebrew nation.'He was directed,
by a vision of an angel,
to summon you to his house,
to hear what you have to say.'So Peter invited them in,
and gave them lodging for the night;
and the next day, Peter,
and a small
group of believers,
set off with them,
towards the house of Cornelius.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – 1 John 1.6-9, 2.1-2

A reading from the first letter of John.

We cannot say

that we have fellowship with God
if we are walking in darkness.

But if we walk in the light,

we have fellowship with God, and with one another.

And the blood of Jesus

cleanses us
from all sin.

If we say that we have no sin,

we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

But if we confess our sins,

God, who is faithful and just,
will forgive us our sins,
and cleanse us

from all unrighteousness.

I will always warn you away from sin -

and yet if anyone does sin,

we have an advocate with the Father,

Jesus Christ the righteous;

and he is the atoning sacrifice for sin,

for us, and for all the world.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Luke 24.36-48Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.The gathered disciples were talking
about all

that they had heard and seen,

when Jesus himself

stood amongst them,

and said, 'Peace be with you.'

They were astonished, and feared

that they were seeing a ghost.

Jesus said to them, 'Why are you afraid,

and why is there doubt in your hearts?

Look at my hands and my feet -

touch, and see -

for a ghost does not have flesh and bones

as you see that I have.'

Overwhelmed by joy and amazement,

the disciples were hardly able to believe

that Jesus himself was standing amongst them.

Jesus said, 'Do you have anything here to eat?'

They gave him a piece of fish,

and he took it, and ate in their presence.

Then he said to them, 'Everything

that is written about me,

in the law of Moses, in the prophets,

and in the psalms, must be fulfilled.'

And he opened their minds

to understand the scriptures, where it is written

that the Messiah is to suffer,

and to rise from the dead on the third day;

and that repentance, and the forgiveness of sins,

will be proclaimed, in his name,

to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

And he said to them, 'You are witnesses

to these things.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 21 APRIL

Fourth Sunday of Easter

FIRST READING – Acts 10.24-29a, 34b-48a

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Two days after Peter's vision,
Peter, and the believers travelling with him,
arrived at the house
of the centurion Cornelius.
Cornelius was expecting them,
and had called together
his relatives and close friends.
When Peter arrived, Cornelius knelt down before him
to greet him.
But Peter helped him up, saying, 'Stand up;
I am only human, like you.'
When Peter went inside, he saw the gathering
that Cornelius had assembled.
And Peter addressed them, saying,
'You know that it is against our law
for Hebrews to associate with Gentiles.
But God has shown me
that I should not regard anyone
as profane, or unclean.
So when I was invited here,
I accepted, without hesitation.
For now I truly understand
that God shows no partiality,
but welcomes those,
from every nation, who honour God,
and do what is right.
This gospel of peace has been revealed
to the people of Israel
in Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.
The message has spread through all Judea.
It began in Galilee,
with the preaching of John the Baptist.
Then Jesus of Nazareth was anointed, by God,
with the Holy Spirit, and with power.
He went about doing good, and healing
all who were oppressed by the devil,
for God was with him.
We ourselves are witnesses to all that he did,
in Judea and in Jerusalem.
They put him to death on a cross.
But God raised him up, on the third day,
and allowed him to appear,
not to all the people, but to those of us
chosen by God as witnesses.
Indeed we ate and drank with him,
after he rose from the dead.
And he commissioned us to continue
the proclamation of the gospel, and to testify
that he is the one, ordained by God,
to be judge of the living and the dead.
All the prophets declare
that everyone who believes in him
will receive forgiveness of sins
through his name.'
While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit
fell upon all those who were gathered.

The Hebrew believers, who had travelled with Peter,
were amazed to see
that the gift of the Holy Spirit
was now being poured out
on the Gentiles,
for they heard them
speaking in many languages
and praising the greatness of God.
Peter said, 'Surely no one
can withhold the water
for baptising these people,
for they have received the Holy Spirit,
just as we have.'
And he ordered that they should be baptised
in the name of Jesus Christ.
This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – 1 John 3.1-2

A reading from the first letter of John.

The love that God the Father has for us
is so great
that we are already declared
to be children of God.
Those who do not know
the Father
neither see nor understand this.
My brothers and sisters, already
we are children of God;
but there is more
that is still to be revealed,
of what we are yet to become;
for we trust that when Christ appears in glory,
we will become yet more fully like him,
for we shall see him face to face.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 10.11-18

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

Jesus said to the Pharisees:

'I am the good shepherd, who will
lay down his life for the sheep.
The hired hand runs away
when the wolf attacks and scatters the sheep.
But I am the good shepherd.
I know my own sheep, and they know me;
just as the Father knows me,
and I know the Father.
And I lay down my life for the sheep.
I have other sheep,
that do not belong to this sheepfold.
They will also
listen to my voice, and come to me,
so that there will be one flock,
and one shepherd.
And now, in the love of the Father,
and as the Father has decreed, I am ready
to lay down my life -
and receive it back again.
No one takes my life from me:
I lay it down of my own accord.
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 28 APRIL*Fifth Sunday of Easter***FIRST READING – Acts 11.1-4, 15-18**

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

The news was reaching

the apostles and believers

throughout Judea

that the Gentiles also

were hearing and welcoming

the word of God.

But when Peter

returned to Jerusalem,

some of the Hebrew believers

criticised him,

demanding to know why

he had accepted

hospitality from Gentiles,

and had even

eaten with them.

So Peter explained

the whole sequence of events,

from his vision, while at prayer,

to the gathering

at the house of Cornelius.

And then he explained, 'As I began to speak,

the Holy Spirit

fell upon them,

just as it had upon us,

at the beginning.

And I remembered

that the Lord had said,

"John baptised with water,

but you will be baptised

with the Holy Spirit."

I saw that God

was giving them

the same gift

that God gave us

when we came to believe in

the Lord Jesus Christ.

And surely

it was not for me

to hinder

the work God!

When they heard Peter's account,

they could

object

no longer.

And they praised God,

saying, 'Now we see

that God has granted

repentance and life

even to the Gentiles.'

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – 1 John 3.16-24a

A reading from the first letter of John.

This is how we know what love is:

that Christ

laid down his life for us.

In the same way, we should

lay down our lives

for one another.

And surely we will

lay down our worldly goods

to support

any brother or sister in need.

My brothers and sisters, let us love,

not only in words, but also in deeds.

Then we will know

that we belong to the truth.

In place of a troubled conscience,

we will have peace in our hearts.

We will come before God

without doubt or fear.

We will have the confidence

to make our requests known to God,

trusting that God will hear our prayers.

For this is God's commandment:

that we should believe in the name

of his Son Jesus Christ,

and love one another.

All who keep this commandment

live in God, and God lives in them.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 15.1-8

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

according to John.

Jesus said to his disciples:

'I am the true vine, and my Father

is the keeper of the vineyard.

He removes every branch in me

that bears no fruit.

Every branch that does bear fruit,

he prunes, and cleans, to bear more fruit.

You have been cleansed

by the words that I have spoken to you.

Now abide in me, as I abide in you.

As a branch cannot bear fruit

unless it abides in the vine,

neither can you bear fruit,

unless you abide in me.

I am the vine, and you are the branches.

Those who abide in me, and I in them,

will bear much fruit.

Apart from me,

like a cut and withered branch,

you can do nothing.

But if you abide in me,

and my words abide in you,

you may ask whatever you wish,

and it will be done for you.

There is glory

for my Father in this:

that you bear much fruit, as my disciples.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 5 MAY*Sixth Sunday of Easter***FIRST READING – Acts 15.1-2, 4-6, 8-11**

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Paul and Barnabas

were once again in Antioch, in Syria.

Some disciples arrived from Judea,

and began teaching the believers in Antioch

that unless they kept

the entire law of Moses,

they could not be saved.

Paul and Barnabas

argued against them.

And eventually it was decided

that Paul and Barnabas,

and some of the other believers,

would go to Jerusalem

to discuss this question

with the apostles

and the elders.

When they arrived in Jerusalem,

they were welcomed

by the apostles and the elders,

and by the whole church;

and they reported

all that God was doing

amongst the believers in Antioch.

But amongst the believers in Jerusalem

were some

who were also loyal

to the Pharisees;

and they insisted

that the believers in Antioch

should be ordered to keep

the entire law of Moses.

So the apostles and the elders

met to consider the matter.

After much debate,

Peter stood up, and said to them,

'It seems that God, who knows every human heart,

has poured out the Holy Spirit upon the Gentiles,

just as God poured out the Holy Spirit upon us.

And in cleansing their hearts by faith,

God has made no distinction between them and us.

Why would we now challenge

what God has done for them,

by placing upon them

a burden so great

that neither our ancestors

nor we ourselves

have been able to bear it?

We have come to believe

that we will be saved

through the grace of the Lord Jesus -

and surely

it is through the grace of the Lord Jesus

that the Gentiles also will be saved.'

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – 1 John 4.7-10

A reading from the first letter of John.

My brothers and sisters,

love is from God,

so let us love one another.

Whoever does not love

does not know God.

And whoever does love

does know God,

and is a child of God;

for God is love.

God's love for us

is revealed in this:

that God sent

God's only Son

into the world

that we might live

through him.

In this is love:

not that we loved God,

but that God loved us,

and sent God's Son

to be the atoning sacrifice

for our sin.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 15.9-17

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

according to John.

Jesus said to his disciples:

'As the Father has loved me,

so I have loved you.

Now abide in my love,

and you will know

within yourselves

the fullness of my joy.

If you keep my commandments,

you will abide in my love, just as I have kept

my Father's commandments,

and abide in his love.

And this is my commandment -

that you love one another

as I have loved you.

There is no greater love than this:

that you lay down your life for your friends.

And you are my friends,

if you keep my commandments.

I do not call you servants any longer,

because the servant does not know

what the master is doing;

but I have called you friends,

because I have made known to you

everything that I have heard from my Father.

You did not choose me, but I chose you,

and I appointed you to go and bear fruit,

fruit that will last;

so that the Father will give you

whatever you ask in my name.

All of this I say to you

to direct you

to love one another.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

THURSDAY 9 MAY*Ascension Day***FIRST READING** – Acts 1.3-11

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

After his suffering and death,
 Jesus presented himself alive
 to the apostles,
 with many convincing proofs,
 appearing to them
 during forty days,
 and speaking
 of the kingdom of God.
 Jesus said to them, 'Do not
 leave Jerusalem,
 but wait here
 for the promise of the Father.

John baptised with water,
 but you will be baptised
 with the Holy Spirit
 not many days from now.'

The apostles asked Jesus, 'Lord,
 is this the time
 when you will restore
 the kingdom of Israel?'

Jesus replied, 'You cannot know
 every time or season
 in the purposes
 of the Father.

But you will receive power
 when the Holy Spirit
 comes upon you.

And you will be my witnesses
 in Jerusalem,
 in all Judea,
 in Samaria,
 and to the ends of the earth.'

Then, as they were watching,
 he was taken up,
 and a cloud
 hid him
 from their sight.

And as they looked intently into the sky,
 two figures in white robes appeared,
 saying, 'Men of Galilee,
 why do you stand here
 looking into the sky?

This Jesus
 has been
 taken up
 from you
 into heaven,
 and will return
 in the same way
 you saw him go.'

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Ephesians 1.17-23*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

The power of God
 has raised Christ from the dead,
 to God's right hand on high,
 far above all earthly powers -
 above every other name,
 in this world or the next.

God has made Christ
 the head of the church;
 and has made the church
 the body of Christ.

So now may your hearts be filled
 with the same power of God, which is
 the gift of God
 to all who believe.

May your hearts be filled
 with confidence
 for the future to which
 God has called you,
 and with all the glorious riches
 that God gives to you,
 and to all the saints.

And may the God of glory,
 the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 give you a spirit
 of wisdom and insight,
 that you may continue to grow
 in the knowledge of God.
 This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Luke 24.44-53*

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

Jesus opened the minds of the disciples
 to understand the scriptures, saying:

'Everything that is written about me,
 in the law of Moses, in the prophets,
 and in the psalms, must be fulfilled:
 that the Messiah is to suffer,
 and to rise from the dead on the third day;
 and that repentance, and the forgiveness of sins,
 will then be proclaimed, in his name,
 to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

You are witnesses to these things.

And now I am sending you
 the gift that my Father promised;
 so stay here in the city
 until you have been clothed with power from on high.'

Then he led them out of Jerusalem
 to Bethany,
 and there, lifting up his hands,
 he blessed them.

And while he was blessing them,
 he withdrew from them,
 and was taken up into heaven.

And they worshipped him.
 They returned to Jerusalem
 filled with joy.

And they were continually in the temple,
 praising God.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 12 MAY*Seventh Sunday of Easter***FIRST READING – Acts 15.12-20,29**

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

After Peter had spoken,
 the whole assembly listened in silence
 as Paul and Barnabas
 told of all the signs and wonders
 that God had done
 through them
 amongst the Gentiles.

When Paul and Barnabas
 had finished speaking,

James responded,
 saying, 'We have heard today
 that God has begun to call,
 from amongst the Gentiles, a people
 to be known by God's name.

And this was foretold in the scriptures,
 where God declares, "I will return, to rebuild
 the city of David from its ruins,
 that all may seek the Lord, including
 the Gentiles I will call by my name."

So I also conclude
 that we should not
 place burdens
 on the Gentiles who are turning to God,
 but should write to them, telling them only
 to abstain from sexual immorality,
 from idolatry,
 and from meat with the blood still in it;
 and that we impose
 upon them
 no further burden than these.'

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – 1 John 4.11-12,16b,18-21

A reading from the first letter of John.

My brothers and sisters,
 as God has loved us,
 so we should love one another.

No one has ever seen God;
 and yet, if we love one another,
 God lives in us,
 and God's love
 is perfected in us.

God is love,
 and those who live in love
 live in God, and God lives in them.

There is no fear in love,
 for perfect love
 casts out all fear.

We love
 because God first loved us.

No one can claim
 to love the God we cannot see
 if they hate the brother or sister they can see.

So we have this command from God:
 that those who love God
 must also love their brothers and sisters.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 17.6-19

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

Jesus looked up to heaven, and prayed:
 'Father, I have made your name known
 to those you gave me
 from the world.

They were yours,
 and you gave them to me;
 and they have trusted your word.

They know
 that everything I have
 comes from you.

I have passed on to them
 the words that you gave to me,
 and they have trusted and received them.

And they know that I myself
 came from you.

I pray for them now;
 praying not for the whole world,
 but for those you have given to me,
 because they are yours,
 and they have honoured me.

Now I am departing from the world,
 to return to you;
 but they will remain in the world.

Father, protect them,
 for the honour of your name,
 the name that you entrusted to me.

May they may be one,
 as we are one.

While I have been with them,
 I have protected them,
 and none has been lost,
 (except the son of destruction,
 as the scriptures foretold).

And now,
 I am coming to you,
 and my prayer
 is that they come to know
 within themselves
 the fullness of my joy.

The world has hated them
 because they do not
 belong to the world,
 just as I do not
 belong to the world.

I am not asking you
 to take them out of the world,
 but I ask you to protect them
 from all evil and harm.

You sent me into the world,
 and now I send them
 into the world.

Father, make them holy
 in the truth of your word.

It is for their sake
 that I offer myself up
 entirely to you.

May they also
 be entirely yours.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 19 MAY

Pentecost

FIRST READING – Acts 2.1-21

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

On the day of Pentecost, the disciples
were all together in one place,
when suddenly, all around them,
there was a sound
like the rush of a violent wind,
filling the entire house
where they were meeting.
Flames, or tongues of fire, appeared amongst them,
and rested on each of them.
And they were filled with the Holy Spirit,
and began to speak in many languages.
At this sound,
a crowd began to gather,
made up of devout Jews,
who were staying in Jerusalem -
from Asia and Arabia,
Egypt and North Africa,
Judea, Turkey, Syria,
Greece and the Balkans,
Crete, and Rome,
both Hebrews and converts.
They said, 'Surely, these who are speaking
are all from Galilee.
And yet we hear them
declaring the greatness of God,
each in
our own language.
What can this mean?'
But others mocked and said, 'They have
had too much wine.'
Peter, standing with the eleven,
raised his voice,
and addressed the crowd, saying:
'People of Judea,
and all who are here in Jerusalem:
these are not drunk, as you suppose,
for it is only nine o'clock in the morning.
No; this is what was spoken
through the prophet Joel,
when God declared: "In those days,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
The young will see visions,
your elders will dream dreams,
and your sons and your daughters
will receive and proclaim my word.
There will be wonders and signs
in the heavens, and on the earth:
blood, and fire, and clouds of smoke,
the sun turned to darkness
and the moon blood red,
before the coming
of the great and glorious day of the Lord.
And everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord
will be saved.'"'
This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – Romans 8.22-26

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

The whole creation is groaning,
as if in labour pains.
And even we,
with the spirit of life within us,
groan inwardly,
as we await the completion
and perfection
of our adoption
into the full freedom
of the children of God.
We do not yet
see it completed,
but we wait for it
with patience, confidence, and trust.
And the spirit helps us
in our present
weakness;
for we do not know
how to pray as we ought,
but the spirit prays within us,
in sighs too deep for words.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 15.26, 16.12-15

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

Jesus said to his disciples:

'From the Father,
I will send to you
the Spirit of truth,
to be with you,
and to speak for me.
I have many things
still to say to you -
more
than you can know.
But the Spirit of truth
will come to you,
and guide you
into all truth.
All that the Father has
is mine.
And the Spirit of truth
will take what is mine
and declare it to you.'
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 26 MAY

Trinity Sunday

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 6.1-8*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

It was in the year that King Uzziah died
that I saw the Lord,
sitting on a high throne,
in robes
that filled the temple.

Angels, around the Lord, called out
to one another, saying: 'Holy, holy, holy
is the Lord of hosts;
the whole earth is filled
with the glory of the Lord.'

Their voices shook
the very foundations
of the temple,
and the temple was filled with smoke.

I said: 'I am ruined!

For I am a man of unclean lips,
and I live amongst a people
of unclean lips;
yet my eyes have seen the King,
the Lord of hosts!'

Then one of the angels flew to me,
and touched my lips
with a burning coal
that had been taken from the altar,
saying, 'Now that this has touched your lips,
your guilt is removed,
and your sin is forgiven.'

Then I heard
the voice of the Lord,
saying, 'Is there anyone I can send?'

And I said, 'Here I am;
send me.'

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Romans 8.14-17*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

Now that you are led
by the spirit of God,
you are adopted
as children of God.

God receives you
not as slaves, to fall back into fear,
but as adopted children,
able to address God
as 'Abba' and 'Father'.

And being adopted
as children of God,
we inherit all things,
alongside Christ himself,
including

both his suffering
and his glory.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 3.1-16*

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

The Pharisee Nicodemus
came to Jesus by night,
saying, 'Teacher, we know,
by the signs that we have seen you do,
that you have come from God,
and that God is with you.'

Jesus said, 'To see the kingdom of God,
you must be reborn,
from above.'

Nicodemus said, 'How can anyone
be born
a second time?'

Jesus said, 'To enter the kingdom of God,
you must be born
of both water and spirit.

Flesh is born of flesh,
and spirit
is born of spirit,
so do not be taken aback
when I say, "You must be reborn, from above."

The wind blows where it chooses,
and you hear the sound of it,
but you do not know
where it comes from
or where it goes.

So it is
with everyone
who is born of the Spirit.'

Nicodemus said, 'How can this be?'

Jesus said, 'You are a teacher of Israel,
and yet you do not see,
or hear, or understand.

You do not believe
when I speak
of what you see on earth,
so how will you believe
when I speak of heaven?'

No one has ascended into heaven -
but the Son of Man
came down
from heaven.

And the Son of Man
must be lifted up
(as the serpent was lifted up
by Moses in the wilderness),
so that whoever believes
in the Son of Man
may have eternal life.

God so loved the world
that God gave
the only Son of God
into the world;
so that everyone who believes
in the Son of God
will not be lost,
but will have eternal life.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 2 JUNE

Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – *Deuteronomy 5.12-15*

A reading from the book of Deuteronomy.

Observe the sabbath day

and keep it holy,
as the Lord your God
commanded you.

For six days

you shall labour,
and do all your work;

but the seventh day
is a sabbath
to the Lord your God.

All shall rest

on the sabbath day:
you,
your sons and daughters,
your servants;
the foreigners living in your towns;
even your livestock.

Remember that you were slaves

in the land of Egypt,
and the Lord your God
brought you out from there
with a mighty hand
and an outstretched arm;

therefore

the Lord your God
commanded you
to honour the sabbath day.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *2 Corinthians 4.8-12*

A reading from the second letter of Paul

to the Corinthians.

We face many challenges,
but we are not driven to despair.

We are struck down,
but we are not destroyed.

We are afflicted in every way,
but we are not crushed.

We are persecuted,
but we know that we are not forsaken.

We risk death, continually, in Jesus' service -
so that,

through our fragile, mortal bodies,
the power
of the life of Jesus
might be made known to you.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 2.23 - 3.6*

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

Jesus was walking through a field of corn
on the sabbath day.

As they walked along, his disciples
plucked some heads of grain.

The Pharisees

said to Jesus, 'What they are doing
is not lawful
on the sabbath.'

Jesus said to the Pharisees, 'Surely
you have read
what David did,

when he and his companions
were hungry, and in need;

David entered
the house of God,
and ate
the sacred bread,

which by law
is reserved

for the priests;
and he gave some
to his companions.'

And Jesus said to them, 'The sabbath
was made for the people -

not the people
for the sabbath;

so the Son of Man
is Lord

even of the sabbath.'

When Jesus entered the synagogue,
there was a man who had
a paralysed hand.

The Pharisees watched closely,
to see whether Jesus
would cure him
on the sabbath.

Jesus called the man forward;
then said to the Pharisees,

'Which is lawful
on the Sabbath:
to do good, or to do evil?
To save life, or to destroy it?'

The Pharisees

gave no reply.

Jesus looked around at them in anger,
grieved
at their hardness of heart.

Jesus said

to the man, 'Hold out your hand.'

The man held out his hand,
and it was healed.

And the Pharisees went out, and
began immediately

to conspire
with the Herodians,
against Jesus,

about how
they might destroy him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 9 JUNE*Tenth Sunday in Ordinary Time***FIRST READING** – *Genesis 3.8-15*

A reading from the book of Genesis.

The man and the woman
heard the Lord God
walking in the garden
in the cool of the evening breeze.

And they hid themselves
from the presence of the Lord God
amongst the trees of the garden.

The Lord God
called out, 'Where are you?'

The man said, 'I heard you
in the garden, and I was afraid,
because I was naked;
and I hid myself.'

The Lord God said, 'Who told you
that you were naked?'

Have you
eaten
the fruit
of the tree
that I commanded you
not to eat?'

The man said, 'The woman
you gave
to be with me -

she gave me
fruit
from the tree,
and I ate.'

The Lord God said to the woman, 'What is this
that you have done?'

The woman said, 'The serpent
tricked me,
and I ate.'

The Lord God
said to the serpent, 'Because
you have done this,
you are cursed, all your days,
more than all other creatures and animals,
to go about
upon your belly,
and eat dust.

And there will be conflict,
between you and the woman,
and between your offspring
and hers.

They will strike you on the head,
and you will strike them on the heel.'

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *2 Corinthians 4.13-15*

A reading from the second letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

In the Psalms,
it says, 'I believe, and so I speak,
even though I am afflicted'.

In the same spirit of faith,
we believe,
and so we speak.

We believe
that the one who raised the Lord Jesus
from the dead
will raise up, with Jesus, all who trust in him.

And so we speak,
to make God's grace known to you,
and to countless more,
to the greater
praise and glory of God.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 3.20-35*

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

The crowd around Jesus at the house
was so large
that Jesus and the disciples
were not able even to eat.

When his family heard of it, they went there, to try
to take him away,
saying, 'He has gone out of his mind.'

Meanwhile, the teachers of the law, from Jerusalem,
were saying, 'He is possessed by the devil!
And that is how he drives out demons!'

But Jesus said to them, 'How can the devil
drive out the devil?'

A kingdom that is divided against itself
will fall.

If the devil is divided, and working against himself,
he is already defeated.

To plunder the house of someone powerful
you first have to defeat them.'

And because they had accused him
of working
not by the Holy Spirit,
but by the devil,

Jesus said, 'People will be forgiven all their sins,
and whatever slanders they utter;
but this slander against the Holy Spirit
is unforgivable.'

Then his mother and his brothers arrived,
but they remained outside,
because of the crowds.

Those sitting around Jesus, in the house,
said to him, 'Your mother and your brothers
are outside, and they are asking for you.'

Jesus said to them, 'Who are
my mother and my brothers?'

And looking at those around him,
he said, 'Here are my mother, and my brothers!
Whoever does the will of God
is my mother, and sister, and brother!'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 16 JUNE*Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time***FIRST READING – Ezekiel 17.22-24**

A reading from the book of the prophet Ezekiel.

I will take a cutting from the top
of a flourishing tree,
says the Lord.

And I will plant it
high in the mountains of Israel.

There it will grow,
and put out branches
and bear fruit.

Every kind of bird
will come
and nest
in its branches.

And every tree
will know
that I am the Lord,

the one who can
make
the green tree wither
and the dry tree flourish,
the one who can
take down the mighty,
and raise up the lowly.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – 2 Corinthians 4.16 - 5.1

A reading from the second letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

Our outer nature
is wasting away,
but every day
our inner nature
is renewed.

So we do not
lose heart.

The temporary afflictions
that we suffer
are as nothing
when compared
to the eternal glory
which is to come.

We look
not to the visible, which is temporary,
but to the invisible, which is eternal.

This earthly tent
may be destroyed,

but we know
that in God
we have a secure and eternal home
in the heavens.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Mark 4.26-34

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

Jesus said
to his disciples,
‘The kingdom of God
is like seed,
that a farmer
scatters on the ground.

The farmer
sleeps,
and rises,
night and day,
knowing
that the seed
will sprout and grow -
though
not knowing
how.

Out from the soil
comes first the stalk,
then the head,
and then the grain.
And when the grain is ripe,
the farmer comes
to collect
the harvest.

Or the kingdom of God
is like
a mustard seed, the smallest of all seeds,
which grows into a great tree;
and the birds of the air
come and nest
in its branches.’

Jesus spoke to the crowds
with these, and many other
parables,
as they could understand.

And he would explain everything
when he had time alone
with his disciples.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 23 JUNE

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – *Job 38.1-13*

A reading from the book of Job.

From the storm
and the whirlwind
came the voice
of the Lord.

'It was I, the Lord, and no mortal,
that measured out
the dimensions
of the earth,
and laid
its foundations.

It was I, the Lord,
that set
its cornerstone
in place,

as the morning stars sang,
and the angels
shouted for joy.

It was I, the Lord,
that enclosed the wild ocean
within its boundaries,
when it was created
in storm-clouds
and thick darkness.

And now, I hear mortals,
questioning my wisdom
with ignorant words!

Prepare yourselves,
for surely
I shall question you.

For it was I, the Lord, and no mortal,
that defined
the boundaries of the ocean,
saying, "This far and no further!
Here shall your mighty waves be stopped!"

And since your mortal days began,
it was I, the Lord, and no mortal,
that directed the sun
to rise every morning,
renewing the earth,
and shaking
the wicked away.'

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *2 Corinthians 5.6-10*

A reading from the second letter of Paul
to the Corinthians.

We would rather be
away from this earthly body,
and fully with the Lord.

But while we remain here, in this earthly body,
we have courage, and confidence -
for we walk by faith,
and not by sight.

And we make it our goal
to be a worthy offering
to the Lord,

knowing
that Christ will be our judge,
and that each
will receive
due reward

for the good
and the harm
that has been done.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 4.35-41*

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

As evening began to fall,
Jesus said to his disciples, 'Let us go,
by boat,
across to the other side.'

And Jesus
dismissed the crowds.

And the disciples
took him
into the boat.

Jesus was asleep
at the back of the boat,
when a great storm arose.

Waves
were beating against the boat,
and the boat
was filling with water.

The disciples woke Jesus,
saying, 'Teacher, do you not care
that we are
about to drown?'

Jesus stood up,
and commanded
the wind, and the sea: 'Be silent! Be still!'

At once, the wind stopped,
and the sea was calm.

Jesus said to them, 'Why are you afraid?
Do you have no faith?'

They were overwhelmed,
and said to one another, 'Who is this,
that even the wind and the waves
obey him?'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 30 JUNE

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – *Lamentations 3.22–33*

A reading from the book of Lamentations.

New every morning

are the love
and the mercy
of the Lord -
steadfast,
and unending.

We can place

all our hope
and trust
in the Lord,
for our Lord is faithful.

The Lord is our inheritance,

and all that we need.

We may have knelt, alone, in prayer,

under persecution and insult,
affliction and grief.

But the Lord honours

those who seek the Lord,
and wait patiently for salvation.

And we can trust

that we shall know, once again,
the steadfast love and mercy of the Lord.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *2 Corinthians 5.14-15,17*

A reading from the second letter of Paul
to the Corinthians.

We declare, with confidence,
that Christ died for us all.

In declaring this, we recognise

that we were all
to die.

But Christ died

for us all.

So let us live

no longer for ourselves, but for Christ,
who died for us - and rose again.

For anyone who is in Christ

is a new creation.

The old has passed away,

and everything is new.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 5.21-43*

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

Jesus was once again teaching by the lake-side,
and a great crowd
had gathered around him.

One of the leaders of the synagogue

came to Jesus, and fell at his feet,
begging him, 'My little daughter
is at the point of death.

Come and lay your hands on her,
that she may be made well, and live.'

So Jesus went with him, and a large crowd
followed them, pressing in on them.

In the crowd, there was a woman
who had been suffering with bleeding
for twelve years.

She had suffered much, under many doctors,

and had spent all that she had;

and she was no better, but rather grew worse.

Having heard about Jesus,

she came up behind him in the crowd,
and touched his cloak, convinced
that by this alone, she would be made well.

Immediately, her bleeding stopped;

and she felt in her body
that she was healed of her disease.

Aware that power had gone out from him,

Jesus turned around
in the crowd, and said, 'Who touched me?'

His disciples said

that with the crowd
pressing in all around him, it made no sense
to ask who had touched him.

But Jesus kept looking around.

The woman, knowing that she had been healed,

knelt before Jesus, trembling, and told him
all that had happened to her.

Jesus said to her, 'Daughter, your faith

has made you well; go in peace.'

While Jesus was still speaking,

some people arrived from the leader's house,
to tell the leader that his daughter was dead,
and that he should trouble the teacher no further.

But overhearing this,

Jesus said, 'Do not be afraid; only believe.'

Jesus now allowed

no one to follow him, except Peter,
and the brothers James and John.

When they arrived at the house

of the leader of the synagogue,

they saw a commotion,

with people weeping and wailing loudly.

Jesus entered the house,

and said to them, 'Why do you make
a commotion, and weep?

The child is not dead, but sleeping.'

For this they mocked him.

But he sent them outside; and taking with him only

the child's father and mother,

and Peter, James, and John,

he went into the room

where the child was lying.

Then he took her by the hand,

and said to her, 'Child, get up!'

And immediately,

the girl (who was twelve years old)
got up, and began to walk about.

Everyone was overwhelmed

at what they had witnessed.

But Jesus ordered them

not to let anyone know what had happened.

And he told them

to give her
something to eat.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 7 JULY

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – *Ezekiel 1.28b - 2.5*

A reading from the book of the prophet Ezekiel.

The heavens were opened,
and I saw visions of God.
I bowed down,
with my face to the ground.
But a voice said, 'Son of Man,
stand up,
and I will speak with you.'
The Spirit entered into me,
and set me on my feet.
And the voice said, 'Son of Man,
I am sending you
to the people of Israel,
for they are a nation
of rebels,
shameless, and stubborn.
For generations,
they have rebelled against me.
I am sending you
to speak to them
in the name of the Lord God.
And whether they hear,
or refuse to hear,
they shall know
that there has been
a prophet
amongst them.'
This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *2 Corinthians 12.2-10*

A reading from the second letter of Paul
to the Corinthians.

I know someone, in Christ, who,
fourteen years ago,
was caught up
into the third heaven.
Whether this was
in the body, or out of the body,
I do not know; only God can know.
But I know that this person
was caught up into Paradise,
and into an experience
that no words can describe,
and no mortal can tell.
On behalf of such a person, I could boast;
but on my own behalf, I will not boast -
except of my weaknesses.
If I were to boast,
I would not
be a fool,
for I would be
speaking the truth.
But I refrain from boasting,
so that you may judge me
solely
by what you see in me
and hear from me.

For despite
the exceptional character
of the revelations,
and to keep me from vanity,
I was given
a thorn in the flesh,
like a messenger of Satan,
to torment me.
Three times
I appealed to the Lord,
that it would leave me,
but the Lord has said to me, 'My grace
is all that you need',
and, 'My strength
is made perfect
in weakness'.
So I boast all the more gladly
of my weaknesses,
that the power of Christ
may dwell within me.
Indeed,
I am content with weaknesses, insults,
hardships, persecutions, and more,
for the sake of Christ;
for when I am weak,
then I am strong.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 6.1-6*

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

Jesus went
to his home town
of Nazareth,
and his disciples went with him.
On the sabbath,
he began teaching in the synagogue,
and many who heard him
were amazed.
They said to one another,
'Where did he get these teachings,
and the power to do such works?
Surely this is
the carpenter, the son of Mary.
His sisters
are here with us, and his brothers -
James, Joseph, Simon, and Jude.'
And they took offence at him.
Jesus said to them, 'Prophets
are honoured everywhere -
except
in their home town,
amongst their own people,
and in their own house.'
And he could do
no work of power there,
except that he laid his hands
on some who were sick,
and they were healed.
And he was amazed
at their unbelief.
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 14 JULY

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – *Amos 7.7-15*

A reading from the book of the prophet Amos.

In a vision,

Amos saw a master-builder,
inspecting
the condition of a wall,
with a plumb-line.

And the Lord

said to Amos,

'I have also inspected
my people Israel,

and found them to be untrue.

And so,

the high places
will be made desolate,

the sanctuaries
will lie in ruins,

and I will rise up
with the sword
against the king.'

So Amos spoke to the people,
as the Lord had commanded,

saying, 'The king
will die by the sword,

and all Israel
will be sent into exile,
away from this land.'

The priest of Bethel
sent a message
to the king,

saying, 'The prophet Amos
is conspiring
against you,

right here
at the heart
of the house of Israel!'

And the same priest of Bethel
said to Amos, 'Get away
from this place,

to the land of Judah.

Earn your bread there,
and work as a prophet there.

But never again
speak here at Bethel,

for this is
the temple of the kingdom,
and the sanctuary of the king.'

But Amos answered him,
saying: 'I am no prophet,

and no son of a prophet.

I am a farmer;
I follow the cattle,
and tend fig trees.

But the Lord
came to me,

and told me
to speak these words
to the people of Israel.'

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Ephesians 1.3-8a*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

Let us praise

the God and Father
of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has
blessed us in Christ
with every spiritual blessing,

freely pouring out upon us
the full riches

of God's love and grace.

For God chose us, in Christ,
before

the foundation of the world.

And now,

through the sacrifice
and the life-blood
of Christ,

God has
forgiven our trespasses,

freed us from sin,
and adopted us, in Jesus Christ,

to be holy,
in the presence of God.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 6.7-13*

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

Jesus called the twelve,
and began to send them out, in pairs,

giving them authority
over unclean spirits.

He told them to take nothing
for their journey,

except a staff;

no bread,

no bag,

no money in their belts,
no extra layer of clothes,

and only sandals
on their feet.

He said to them, 'Whenever
you enter a house,

stay there,

until you leave that place.

And if a place

will not welcome you -

if they refuse to hear you -

shake the dust

of that place

off your feet

as you leave.'

So they went out

proclaiming the message
that all should repent.

They cast out many demons,
and anointed with oil

many who were sick,

and they were healed.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 21 JULY

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – *Jeremiah 23.1-6*

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah.

Woe to the shepherds

who destroy and scatter
the sheep of my pasture,
says the Lord.

You are the shepherds of my people,
but you have not attended to them,
says the Lord, the God of Israel;

you have scattered them,
and driven them away.

Now I will attend to you,
for the evil you have done,
says the Lord.

Then I myself
will gather the remnant of my flock
out of all the lands
where I have driven them.

I will bring them back
to their sheep-fold,
and they will flourish,
and become many,
once again.

I will raise up shepherds who will
care for them.

They will no longer be afraid,
and none will be lost.

And the days are surely coming, says the Lord,
when I will raise up
a new son of David, who will
reign as king,
with wisdom,
justice, and righteousness.

Judah will be saved,
and Israel will dwell in safety.

And his name will be: 'The Lord
is our righteousness.'

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Ephesians 2.12-22*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

Previously,

you who are Gentiles, by birth,
did not know Christ.

You were excluded from Israel.

You were strangers
to the covenants
and the promises of God -
without God, and without hope.

But now, you who were once
far off
have been brought near
by the blood of Christ.

For Christ is our peace.

In his flesh,
he has broken down
the hostility
which had been like
a dividing wall between us.

He has abolished the law,
with its commandments and decrees,
that he might create in himself
one new humanity, in place of the two,
making peace,
and reconciling both groups to God, in one body,
through the cross,
by which he put to death
their hostility.

So he came and proclaimed peace
to you who were far off,
and peace to those who were near;
and through him, we all now
have access,
in one Spirit,
to the Father.

So now, you are no longer strangers,
and foreigners,
but fellow citizens, with the saints -
fellow members of the household of God,
built upon the foundation
of the apostles and the prophets,
with Christ Jesus himself
as the cornerstone.

In Christ,
the whole structure is joined together,
and is built up
into a holy temple
in the Lord.

And you also
are now
built into
this holy temple,
this dwelling-place for God.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 6.30-34*

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

The twelve returned from their mission.

They gathered around Jesus,
and told him all
that they had done and taught.

But many people were still coming and going,
and they had no time,
even to eat.

So Jesus said to them, 'Let us go away,
to a quiet place, by ourselves,
and rest a while.'

And Jesus and the disciples left, by boat,
for an isolated place, where they could be alone.

But many saw them leave,
and realised where they were going.
And people hurried there on foot,
from all the towns and villages around,
and arrived there ahead of them.

So as Jesus went ashore,
he saw a great crowd.

And he had compassion on them,
for they were like sheep without a shepherd;
and he began to teach them many things.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 28 JULY*Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time***FIRST READING – 2 Kings 4.42-44**

A reading from the second book of Kings.

There was a famine
throughout the land.

But in one village, in the mountains,
some barley
ripened.

The farmer made
twenty bread rolls
from the first of the crop,
and took them to Elisha,
as an offering
of the first-fruits,
as required by the law.

When he presented them to Elisha,
Elisha said to his servant, 'Give them
to the people, so that
they may eat.'

But Elisha's servant said, 'How can I serve
twenty
bread rolls
to a hundred people?'

Elisha said again, 'Give them
to the people, so that they may eat,
for the Lord says
they shall eat, and have bread to spare.'

So Elisha's servant
gave the twenty bread rolls
to the people,
and they ate, and had bread to spare,
as the Lord had made known to Elisha.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – Ephesians 3.14-21

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

I pray to God, the Father of all,
that through the Holy Spirit,
and by the riches of God's glory,
your inner strength
will be renewed.

I pray that Christ will dwell in your hearts;
and I pray that you will have
deep roots of faith and love.

Indeed, I pray that you, and all the saints,
will come to know the full
breadth, and length, and height, and depth,
of the love of Christ,
that is beyond our understanding.

For by working
powerfully within us,
God is able to accomplish
far more
than we can ever ask,
or even imagine.

To God be the glory,
in the church, and in Christ Jesus,
through all generations, for ever. Amen.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – John 6.1-21

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

Jesus crossed to the far side of the Sea of Galilee.

A large crowd kept following him,
because they saw the miraculous signs
that he was doing, in healing the sick.

Jesus went up on the hillside,
and sat down there, with his disciples.

It was just before the Hebrew festival of the Passover.

When Jesus looked up, and saw
the large crowd, coming towards him,
he said to Philip, 'Where are we to buy bread,
for all these people to eat?'

Jesus said this
to test Philip, for Jesus himself
knew what he was going to do.

Philip answered Jesus, 'Six months wages
would not buy enough bread
for each of them to have even a small piece.'

But Andrew (the brother of Simon Peter)
said to Jesus, 'There is a boy here
with five barley-loaves, and two fish;
although that is nothing, amongst so many.'

Jesus said, 'Tell the people to sit down.'

There was grass there,
and the people sat down;
about five thousand in all.

Then Jesus took the five barley-loaves,
and when he had given thanks,
he distributed them
to those who were seated;
and in the same way, the fish,
as much as they wanted.

When they had all had enough to eat,
Jesus told his disciples
to gather up
the pieces left over,
so that nothing would be wasted.

And gathering up the pieces,
they filled twelve baskets.

When the people saw the sign that Jesus had done,
they began to say, 'This is surely
the prophet, who was to come into the world.'

When Jesus realised
that they were about to take him by force
to make him their king,
he withdrew again, to the mountain, by himself.

When evening came,
and it was becoming dark,
Jesus had still not returned.

The disciples went down to the lake, got into
a boat, and set out to cross the lake, in the dark.
The lake became rough, with a strong wind blowing.

When they had rowed about three or four miles,
they saw Jesus, walking on the lake,
towards the boat, and they were overcome with fear.

But Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid.'

And as soon as they received him
into the boat, they found that they had
safely reached the shore.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 4 AUGUST

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – *Exodus 16.2-3, 9-15*

A reading from the book of Exodus.

The Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron,
saying, 'If only we had died,
by the hand of the Lord,
in the land of Egypt, where we ate our fill
of meat and bread.

But you have brought us out
into this wilderness, to die of hunger.'

Aaron gathered the people together,
and said, 'Draw near to the Lord,
for the Lord has heard
your complaining.

And the Lord says this:

"In the evening, you will eat meat;
and in the morning,
you will have your fill of bread;
and then you will know
that I am the Lord your God."

As Aaron was speaking to the people,
they looked towards the wilderness,
and the glory of the Lord
appeared in a cloud.

That evening,
quails flew in, and covered the camp.

And in the morning,
there was a layer of dew,
all around the camp.

When the dew lifted,
there on the surface of the wilderness
was a fine flaky substance,
as fine as frost
on the ground.

When the Israelites saw it,
they asked one another what it could be.

Moses said, 'It is the bread
that the Lord
has given you
to eat.'

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Ephesians 4.1-6*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

I urge you

to lead a life
that is worthy
of the high calling
that you have received:

a life of humility, gentleness, and patience,
forgiving and accepting one another in love,
and working always
to live in unity
and peace.

For there is one body, and one Spirit,
one hope to which we are called,
one Lord, one faith, one baptism,
one God and Father of all.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 6.22-35*

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

Some from the crowd
stayed overnight, at the lakeside,
at the place where Jesus had
given thanks over the bread,
and the whole crowd
had eaten.

In the morning, when they realised
that both Jesus and the disciples had left,
they went by boat
to Capernaum,
to look for Jesus there.

When they found Jesus,
they asked him, 'Teacher, when did you come here?'

Jesus said, 'You have come to find me,
not because you understood the meaning
of the sign
that you witnessed,
but because you ate your fill of bread!

Do not work for the food that perishes,
but work for the food
that endures for eternal life.

This is the food
that the Son of Man will give you;
for it is on the Son of Man
that God the Father
has set his seal.'

They said to him, 'What must we do
to be doing
the work of God?'

Jesus said, 'This is the work of God:
that you believe and trust
in the one
that God has sent.'

So they said to him, 'What sign
are you going to give us,
so that we may see it,
and believe and trust in you?'

Our ancestors
ate manna in the wilderness;
it says, "He gave them bread from heaven to eat."

Jesus said to them, 'It was not Moses who gave you
the bread from heaven;
it is my Father who gives you
the true bread from heaven -
the bread of God
that comes down from heaven
and gives life to the world.'

They said to him, 'Sir,
give us this bread always.'

Jesus said to them, 'I am
the bread of life.
Whoever comes to me
will never be hungry,
and whoever believes in me
will never be thirsty.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 11 AUGUST

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – *1 Kings 19.4-8*

A reading from the first book of Kings.

Elijah went a full day's journey
into the wilderness.

He sat down

in the shade of a single tree,
and asked that he might die:

'It is enough, now, Lord;
take away my life,
for I am no better
than my ancestors.'

Then he lay down,
in the shade of the tree,
and slept.

He was woken by an angel,
saying, 'Get up, and eat.'

And there, at his side,
was some bread, baked on hot stones,
and a jar of water.

He ate, and drank,
and lay down again.

Then he was woken again,
by the angel of the Lord,
saying, 'Get up, and eat,
for you have a great journey ahead of you.'

Elijah got up,
and ate, and drank.

And he went,
in the strength of that food,
forty days and forty nights,
to Horeb, the mountain of God.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Ephesians 4.11-16*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

Christ himself

gives to the church
apostles, and prophets,
evangelists, pastors, and teachers,

to build up the body of Christ,
to equip the saints

for the work of ministry,
to lead us to unity
of faith and understanding,
and to lead us to maturity,
and the full stature
of Christ.

So we will no longer be like children,
vulnerable to trickery and deception,

but we will grow up, in every way,
in truth,
and in love,

into Christ, who is the head,
with each part of the body
joined and connected together,
and working as it should,

growing together
in the strength of love.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 6.41-51*

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

They began to complain about Jesus,
because he said, 'I am the bread
that came down from heaven.'

They were saying, 'This is Jesus,
the son of Joseph.

We know his father,
and his mother.

How can he say
that he
came down from heaven.'

Jesus said, 'Do not complain
amongst yourselves
at what I have said.

The only one who has
seen the Father
is the one who has
come down
from God;

and everyone who comes to me
is drawn to me
by the Father who sent me;
and I will raise them up
on the last day.

It says in Isaiah,
"They shall all
be taught
by God."

Everyone who hears
the word
of the Father,
and learns
from the Father,
will come to me.

And everyone who believes and trusts in me
will have eternal life.

I am
the bread of life.

Your ancestors
ate the manna
in the wilderness, and died.

But here is the bread
that comes down from heaven,
that you may eat,
and not die.

I am the living bread
that comes down from heaven.

Whoever eats this bread
will live for ever.

And my body
is the bread
that I give
for the life
of the world.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 18 AUGUST

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – *Proverbs 9.1-6*

A reading from the book of Proverbs.

Wisdom has built her house,
prepared her feast,
and set out
her finest wines.
She has sent out her messengers,
announcing, from the highest places in the city:
All who seek wisdom, gather here!
All who seek good judgement,
knowledge, and understanding, Come!
Eat my bread,
and drink my wine!
Walk in the way of understanding!
Lay aside
all foolishness,
and live!
This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Ephesians 4.25 - 5.2*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

Let there be no dishonesty;
speak only the truth to one another,
for we are all members
of one body.
When you are angry,
allow no opportunity for the devil;
take care
not to fall into sin;
do not let the sun go down
on your anger.
Let all do honest work,
and then
share what they have
with the needy;
let none be a thief.
When you speak,
let your words be gracious and encouraging
to all who hear,
and never harmful.
From the day
you first came to Christ,
you have the Holy Spirit within you,
marking you as God's own,
for the day of salvation.
So do not grieve the Holy Spirit.
Put away all bitterness, anger,
dispute, slander, and malice.
Be kind to one another,
and gracious,
forgiving one another,
as God, in Christ, has forgiven you.
Walk in the way
of godliness and love.
And follow the example of Christ, who loved us,
and in that love,
offered up his life for us
to God the Father.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 6.51-58*

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

Jesus said, 'I am the living bread
that comes down from heaven.
All who eat this bread
will live for ever.
And my body
is the bread
that I give
for the life of the world.'
They argued
amongst themselves,
about how Jesus could describe his body
as bread,
to eat.
Jesus said to them, 'Truly, I tell you:
unless you eat the body
of the Son of Man,
and drink his blood,
you have no life in you.
Those who eat my body
and drink my blood
have eternal life,
and I will raise them up
on the last day.
I will live in them,
and they
will live in me.
They will live
as one
with me,
just as I live
as one
with the Father who sent me.
I am the true and living bread
that comes down from heaven.
Your ancestors ate
their bread from heaven,
and they died.
But all who eat this
bread from heaven
will live for ever.'
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 25 AUGUST

Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – *Joshua 24.1a, 14-18*

A reading from the book of Joshua.

Joshua gathered the tribes of Israel,
with their elders, leaders, judges, and officers,
and addressed them, saying:

‘Turn away from the gods
that your ancestors served,
and honour the Lord your God
with all your heart;
for it is the Lord your God who has
brought you to this place,
and to this day.

And if you are
unwilling
to serve the Lord your God,
choose this day
the gods you will serve,
whether the gods of your ancestors,
or the gods of the those
in whose land you are living.

But as for me and my household,
we will serve the Lord!’
And the people answered,
‘Far be it from us
that we should forsake the Lord our God
to serve other gods;
for it is the Lord our God who brought us,
and our ancestors,
out of the house of slavery in the land of Egypt.

It is the Lord our God who gave many
great signs
in our sight,
protected us along the way,
and brought us to this land.

Therefore we also
will serve the Lord,
for the Lord
is our God.’

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Ephesians 6.10-20*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

Be strong
in the power of the Lord.
Put on
the whole armour of God,
to protect you
from all the tricks of the devil.
For we struggle
not against flesh and blood,
but against
all the powers of darkness,
in this world,
and the world beyond.

Therefore, put on
the whole armour of God,
so that you may be able to stand firm
against every assault of the devil.

Fasten the belt of truth
around your waist.
Put on the helmet of salvation,
and the breast-plate of righteousness,
and on your feet, the gospel of peace.
Take up the shield of faith,
to protect you
from the flaming arrows
of the evil one.
And the word of God
will be your sword.
At all times, pray in the Spirit,
making all your requests
known to God.
Stay alert, and persevere
in prayer
for all the believers.
And pray also for me,
that whenever I speak,
I may be given the words
to proclaim, with confidence,
the gospel
for which I remain
an ambassador in chains.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 6.58a,c,60-69*

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

Jesus said, ‘I am the true and living bread
that comes down from heaven.
All who eat this bread
will live for ever.’

Many of the disciples said
that this teaching
was difficult to understand.

Jesus said, ‘Some of you will see
the Son of Man ascending, back up, into heaven.

The spirit gives life;
the flesh counts for nothing;
and the words that I have spoken to you
are spirit, and life.

The call to follow me
is a gift from the Father;
and yet, still, amongst you,
there are some who do not believe.’

For Jesus knew,
from the beginning, who did not believe;
and he knew who would betray him.

Many of the disciples
now turned away,
and no longer went about with him.

Jesus asked the twelve
whether they also
would now turn away.

Simon Peter said, ‘Lord,
there is no other
that we could follow.

You have the words of eternal life.
We have come to believe, and to know,
that you are the Holy One of God.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 1 SEPTEMBER

Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – Deuteronomy 4.1a,6-8

A reading from the book of Deuteronomy.

When you observe

the commandments and teachings
of the Lord our God,
that I have set before you this day,
other nations will hear of them,
and say, "This is truly a people
of great wisdom
and understanding!"

For no other nation

can call upon
a god who is near to them
like the Lord our God.

And no other nation

has commandments and teachings
to establish justice
and righteousness
like the commandments and teachings
of the Lord our God.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – James 1.19-27

A reading from the letter of James.

Let everyone be quick to listen,
and slow to speak.

Especially, be slow to anger,
for your anger
does not produce
God's righteousness.

Cleanse yourselves

from all wickedness,
and welcome with humility
the word of God
that is planted in your heart,

for it has the power
to save your soul.

Be doers of the word,

and not merely hearers, who deceive themselves.

Those who are hearers of the word, and not doers -

it is as though they look in a mirror,
and as soon as they turn away,
forget what they look like.

But those who look into the perfect law -

the law that brings freedom -
and do not forget it, but act upon it -
they will be blessed in all that they do.

In the same way,

if you consider yourself religious,
but do not control your tongue,
your religion is worthless.

The religion that is acceptable

to God, the Father, is this:

to care for orphans and widows in their distress,
and to keep yourself
from being corrupted
by the world.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Mark 7.1-8, 14-15, 21-23

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

When some Pharisees and scribes

came from Jerusalem

to see Jesus,

they noticed that some of his disciples

did not observe

the ceremonial cleansing of hands
before eating;

for the Pharisees,

and all who keep the Hebrew law
in the tradition of the elders,

always observe

the ceremonial cleansing of hands
before eating;

and after visiting the market;

and there are many other traditions

that they observe,

including the ceremonial cleansing
of vessels, and furniture.

So the Pharisees and the scribes

asked Jesus, 'Why do your disciples
not live

according to the tradition of the elders,
but eat

without the ceremonial cleansing
of their hands?'

Jesus said to them, 'You hypocrites.

You hold to your human traditions
while neglecting
the commandments of God.

As it says in Isaiah, "They honour me

with their lips, but their hearts
are far from me;

their worship is in vain,

for their teachings

are their own creation."

Then Jesus said to his disciples,

'There is nothing outside a person,

that by going in, can defile;
but the things that come out

are what defile.

For it is from within -

from the human heart -

that evil intentions come:

sexual immorality,

theft, and murder,

greed, and malice,

deceit, and recklessness,

envy, and slander,

arrogance, and foolishness.

All these

evil things

come from within -

and they are what defile.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 8 SEPTEMBER

Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 35.4-7*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Be strong, and do not fear,
for God will come to save you,
bringing justice
and vindication.

On that day,
the blind will see,
the deaf will hear,
the lame will dance,
and the voiceless will sing for joy.
Water will spring up in the wilderness,
and rivers will flow in the desert.
The burning sand will become a pool,
and the thirsty ground an oasis.

And where
the desert wild-animals
once lay in wait,
reeds and rushes will grow.
This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *James 2.1-9, 14-17*

A reading from the letter of James.

My brothers and sisters,
acts of favouritism
have no place
amongst those who have faith
in our Lord Jesus Christ.

If a person in fine clothes
and expensive accessories
comes in,
and you say, 'Have a seat up here',
and another comes in, poor
and in dirty clothes,
and you say, 'Stand there,'
or, 'Sit on the floor,'
your judgement between them
is godless.

For God has chosen the poor in the world
to be rich in faith,
and has honoured them
with the inheritance of the kingdom
that is promised
to those who love God.

But in
your acts of favouritism,
you have dishonoured the poor.

Surely you can see
that it is the rich who oppress you,
and drag you into court,
and dishonour the name of God.

The law
above all other laws
in scripture
is this: 'You shall love your neighbour
as yourself.'

Acts of favouritism
go against this law.

My brothers and sisters,
if you claim to have faith,
but do not act upon it,
it is no benefit to you;
a faith like that
cannot save you.
If someone is dressed in rags,
and has no food,
it does no good
to say, 'keep warm, and eat well,'
unless you also
give them clothing, shelter and food.

Faith
that does not lead
to good works
is no faith at all.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 7.31-37*

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

Jesus was in the region
to the east of Galilee.
They brought to him
a man with no hearing,
and with
an impediment
in his speech.

They begged Jesus
to lay his hand on him,
to heal him.
Jesus took the man aside,
in private, away from the crowd.
He touched the man's ears,
and tongue,
and looked up to heaven,
and said aloud, 'be open.'

Immediately,
the man's ears were opened,
and he could hear;
and his tongue was freed,
and he began to speak clearly.
Jesus asked them
to tell no one;
but the more
he asked them,
the more they told
of all that Jesus did,
saying, 'He even makes the deaf to hear,
and frees the tongue
of the voiceless
to speak.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 15 SEPTEMBER

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 50.4-9a*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The Lord God

has taught me wisdom,
that I may speak words of comfort
to those who are weary.

Morning by morning,
the Lord God awakens me,
that I may learn wisdom
as a servant of the Lord.

When I face persecution and violence,
I do not hide my face, or turn away,
for the Lord God is my helper,
and I will not
be defeated or ashamed.

I set my face like flint,
for my protector,
the one who brings justice,
is near.

Others may confront me,
to challenge, accuse, and condemn;
but the Lord God is my protector,
and they will not prevail.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *James 3.2-5,7-11*

A reading from the letter of James.

Every species on earth
has been tamed,
but no one can tame the tongue, which is
recklessly dangerous,
and full of poison.

The tongue is small,
but has great power,
like the bit
in the mouth
of a horse,
or the rudder
of a great ship,
or the spark
that can set a whole forest ablaze.

With the tongue, we praise
our Lord and Father;
and with the same tongue, we curse
our neighbours, who are made
in the image of God.

Fresh and foul water
do not flow
from the same spring.

And yet
from the same mouth
come both blessings and curses.

We all have many faults,
but if only we could control the tongue,
we would soon have perfect self-control
in everything.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 8.27-35*

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

Jesus went with his disciples
towards the villages
north of Galilee.

On the way,
he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say
that I am?'

The disciples replied, 'Some say
John the Baptist;
others say
Elijah, or one of the prophets.'

Jesus asked them, 'But who do you say
that I am?'

Peter said, 'You are
the Messiah.'

Jesus warned the disciples
to say this to nobody.

And he began to teach them
that the Son of Man
must undergo
great suffering:

that he would be rejected by the elders,
the chief priests,
and the teachers of the law,
and be killed,
and after three days,
rise again.

Peter took Jesus aside,
and began to rebuke him.

But Jesus turned,
and looked at his disciples,
and rebuked Peter,
saying: 'Get behind me, Satan;
for your mind
is still set
on the human,
and not the divine.'

Then Jesus
said to the crowd, as well as
to his disciples, 'If any
one of you
wishes to be
my disciple,
you must deny yourself,
take up your cross,
and follow me.

If you try
to save your life,
you will lose it.
But if you lose your life,
for my sake,
and for the sake of the gospel,
you will find it.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 22 SEPTEMBER

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – *Jeremiah 11.18-20*

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah.

Like a lamb, I was led
to the slaughter.

For I did not know
that it was
against me
that they were devising
their evil schemes,
until the Lord
made it known to me.

They were saying, 'Let us destroy
both the tree
and its fruit.

Let us cut him off
from the land of the living,
so that even his name
will be remembered
no more!'

But you, O Lord of hosts -
you are the one who judges righteously.

You examine the heart
and the mind.

Let me see your judgement upon them,
for I have committed my cause
to you.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *James 3.13 - 4.3,7b-8a,10*

A reading from the letter of James.

It is by a life
filled with good deeds
and with gentleness
that you demonstrate
true wisdom
and understanding.

Bitterness, envy,
and selfish ambition,
do not come

from godly wisdom,
but are earthly,
unspiritual,
even devilish,
bringing disorder
and wickedness
of every kind.

Godly wisdom
is peaceful,
gentle,
and accommodating;

full of mercy
and good deeds,
with no trace
of partiality
or hypocrisy.

And what is planted in peace
brings a harvest
of righteousness.

Your conflicts and disputes
come from unworthy desires
that are at war
within you.

You want something
you do not have,
so you engage in disputes and conflicts
that lead even to murder.

But you do not have,
because you do not ask!

Or you ask wrongly,
seeking only
to fulfil
your unworthy desires.

So resist the devil,
and the devil will flee from you.

Draw near to God,
and God will draw near to you.

Be humble before God,
and God will raise you up.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 9.30-37*

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

Jesus and his disciples
travelled on
through Galilee.

And Jesus did not want anyone
to know
that they were there;

for he was teaching his disciples,
saying, 'The Son of Man will be betrayed,
and they will kill him.
And after three days,
he will rise again.'

But they did not understand what he was saying,
and they were afraid to ask him.

At the end of the day, Jesus asked them
what they had been arguing about,
as they had been
walking along.

And they were silent,
for they had been arguing
about which of them
was the greatest.

Jesus sat down,
and called the twelve to him,

and said, 'Whoever wants
the highest place
must take
the lowest place of all,
and be the servant of all.'

Then Jesus called a child
to stand amongst them,
and said to the disciples,
'Whoever welcomes a child, in my name,
welcomes me;

and whoever welcomes me
welcomes the one who sent me.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 29 SEPTEMBER

Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – *Numbers 11.14, 16, 25-29*

A reading from the book of Numbers.

Moses cried out to the Lord
that leading the people
was too great a burden
to bear alone.
So the Lord
instructed Moses
to gather seventy of the elders of Israel
at the Tent of Meeting.
And when they were gathered,
the Lord came down, in the cloud,
and spoke to Moses,
and took some of the spirit that was on Moses
and put it on the seventy elders,
and they began to speak
the word of the Lord,
as prophets.
Two of the elders
had not gone out
to the Tent of Meeting,
but had remained in the camp;
and the spirit came upon them also;
and they began to speak
the word of the Lord,
as prophets, there in the camp.
When word of this
reached Moses and Joshua
at the Tent of Meeting,
Joshua said, 'My lord Moses,
you must stop them!'
But Moses said to Joshua,
'Do not be jealous on my behalf.
I would prefer
that all the Lord's people
were prophets,
with the spirit of the Lord upon them!'
This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *James 5.13-16*

A reading from the letter of James.

Those who are suffering
should pray.
Those who are strong
should sing praise.
Those who are sick
should call
for the leaders of the church,
to pray over them,
and to anoint them
with oil
in the name of the Lord.
And the prayer offered in faith
will restore
the one who is sick,
for the Lord will raise them up;
and if they have sinned,
they will be forgiven.

So confess your faults to one another,
and pray for one another,
that you may be restored;
for the prayer of the righteous
is powerful, and effective.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 9.38-48*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Mark.
John said to Jesus, 'Teacher, we saw someone else
casting out demons
in your name,
and we told him to stop,
because he
was not following us.'
Jesus said, 'Do not stop him;
for no one who does powerful works
in my name
will be able
soon afterwards
to speak evil of me.
Anyone who is
not against us
is for us.
And anyone who gives you
even a cup of water to drink,
in my name,
will receive their reward.
But anyone who causes
even the least
of these who trust in me
to stumble -
for them,
it would have been better
to be thrown into the sea
with a millstone
around their neck.
In the same way,
if your hand
causes you to stumble,
it is better to cut it off,
and enter life with one hand,
than enter hell with two.
And if your foot
causes you to do wrong,
better to cut it off,
and enter life with one foot,
than enter hell with two.
And if your eye
causes you to do wrong,
it is better to be rid of it,
and enter
the kingdom of God
with one eye
than enter hell with two.
This is the Gospel of the Lord

SUNDAY 6 OCTOBER*Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time***FIRST READING – Genesis 2.7-8, 15, 18-24**

A reading from the book of Genesis

The Lord God
 formed Adam,
 from the dust of the earth,
 and breathed
 into Adam's nostrils
 the breath of life;
 and Adam
 became
 a living being.
 And the Lord God
 planted
 a garden,
 in Eden, in the east;
 and the Lord God
 placed Adam
 in the garden, to till it,
 and to keep it.
 Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good
 for the man
 to be alone.
 I will make him a helper,
 to be alongside him.'
 So the Lord God formed, out of the ground,
 every animal of the field,
 and every bird of the air.
 And the Lord God brought them to Adam,
 and whatever Adam called each living creature,
 that was its name.
 And so Adam gave names
 to the cattle, to the birds of the air,
 and to every animal of the field.
 But still, no helper was found
 to be alongside him.
 So the Lord God caused Adam
 to fall into a deep sleep.
 And while Adam slept,
 the Lord God took
 one of Adam's ribs,
 and formed the rib
 into a woman.
 And the Lord God
 brought her
 to Adam.
 And Adam said, 'This, at last,
 is bone of my bone,
 and flesh of my flesh;
 and I shall call her Woman,
 for she was brought forth
 out of the man.'
 And so it is
 that a man leaves
 his father and his mother,
 and is joined to his wife,
 and they become
 one flesh.
 This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – Hebrews 2.6-11

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

In the psalms, it says: 'What are human beings,
 that you remember them,
 or mortals, that you care for them?'
 And it continues, 'You have made them,
 for a little while,
 to be lower than the angels;
 and yet you have crowned them
 with glory and honour,
 and you have set them
 to rule over
 all that you have made.'
 We do not yet see this
 fully accomplished
 for us all.
 But we do see Jesus, who,
 for a little while, was indeed
 made lower than the angels;
 and, by the grace of God,
 having tasted death for everyone,
 is indeed
 now crowned
 with glory and honour.
 Having shared with us in our sufferings,
 he has become the pioneer of our salvation,
 and will lead us now
 to that same glory and honour;
 for he is not ashamed
 to call us
 his brothers and sisters,
 sharing the same Father -
 the creator of all that exists.
 This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Mark 10.13-16

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

People were bringing children to Jesus,
 that he might bless them.
 When Jesus realised
 that the disciples
 were trying to stop them,
 he was indignant,
 and said to them,
 'Let the children come to me,
 for the kingdom of God belongs
 to such as these.
 Truly, I tell you,
 whoever does not receive
 the kingdom of God
 like a little child
 will never enter it.'
 And he put his arms around them,
 and blessed them.
 This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 13 OCTOBER

Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – *Amos 5.6-7, 10-15*

A reading from the book of the prophet Amos.

Now is the time to seek the Lord, and live.

For the Lord is preparing

to sweep through the nation
like a fire.

For you replace justice with poison,
and you trample righteousness
to the ground.

You despise those who challenge you,
and all who speak the truth.

And you trample on the poor, with taxes
on all that they produce.

And so, the Lord says this: you have built
fine stone houses, but you will not
live in them;

you have planted pleasant vineyards,
but you will not drink their wine.

For I know all your offences,
and the number of your crimes:

how you take bribes,
persecute the innocent,
and deny justice to the needy.

The prudent say nothing, for it is indeed
an evil time.

You say that the Lord God is with you -
so turn to pursue good, and not evil,
that the Lord God
may indeed be with you, and you may live!

Hate all that is evil, love all that is good,
establish justice in your courts,
and the Lord God of hosts
may yet have mercy upon you!

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Hebrews 4.12-16*

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

The word of God
is living and active.

Sharper than a sword, it pierces
into the soul and the spirit, and judges
the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

None can hide from it, for everything will be seen
when we are called to give an account
before God.

But we have
a great high priest, who has
ascended into heaven,
Jesus, the Son of God.

And he is able to sympathise with our weakness,
for he himself has been tested,
in every way, as we are -
yet without sin.

So on that day, let us approach
the throne of grace
with confidence,

trusting that we will find
grace, mercy, and salvation.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 10.17-31*

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

Jesus was setting out on a journey
when a man ran up to him,
and knelt down
before him,
asking, 'Good Teacher, what must I do
to inherit eternal life?'

Jesus said to him, 'Why do you call me good?
No one is good, but God alone.

And you know the commandments: that you shall not
murder, or commit adultery, or steal,
or bear false witness, or defraud;
and to honour your father and mother.'

The man said to Jesus, 'Teacher,
all these I have kept
since my youth.'

Jesus looked at him with compassion,
and said, 'You lack one thing.
Go, and sell everything you have,
and give the money to the poor;
and you will have treasure in heaven.
Then come, follow me.'

When he heard this, he was dismayed,
for he had many possessions;
and he went away grieving.

Jesus looked around,
and said to his disciples, 'How hard it is
for the rich
to enter the kingdom of God!'

The disciples were taken aback at these words.
But Jesus said to them again, 'How hard it is
to enter the kingdom of God!

It is easier for a camel
to go through
the eye of a needle
than for someone who is rich
to enter the kingdom of God.'

The disciples said to one another, 'Who then
can be saved?'

Jesus looked at them, and said, 'For mortals,
it is impossible;
but for God, all things are possible.'

Peter said to Jesus, 'Look,
we have left everything
and followed you.'

Jesus said, 'Truly, I tell you, all who have left
home, mother, father,
brothers, sisters, children, livelihood, or inheritance,
for my sake,
and for the sake of the gospel,

will receive them back,
a hundred times over,
even now, in this present age -
though with persecutions -

and in the age to come,
will have eternal life.

But many who are first now,
will be last;
and many who are last, will be first.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 20 OCTOBER

Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – *Isaiah 53.4-6*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

We counted him as worthless,
as struck down
by God.

Yet truly
he bore our anguish,
and carried our pain.

He was wounded
for our transgressions,
and crushed
for our iniquities.

He bore the punishment
that makes us whole.

And by his wounds,
we are healed.

Like sheep, we have gone astray,
and turned,
each to our own way.

And the Lord has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Hebrews 5.1-6*

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

Each high priest of the temple
is chosen

from amongst the people
to represent them before God,
presenting their offerings
and their sacrifices for sin.

Having been chosen from amongst the people,
the high priest of the temple
is able to deal gently
with the foolish,

and with those who are going astray,
for the high priest himself
is subject to human weakness,
and he offers sacrifices
for his own sins,
as well as those of the people.

He does not presume
to choose for himself
the honour
of serving as high priest,
but serves only
when called by God.

And in the same way,
Christ did not
take upon himself
the honour
of becoming our high priest,
but was appointed
by God, who says, 'You are my Son,
I am your Father,
and I appoint you
high priest for ever.'

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 10.35-45*

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

The brothers James and John
approached Jesus
with a request.

Jesus said, 'What is it
that you would like me
to do for you?'

And James and John said, 'Let us sit,
one at your right hand,
and one at your left,
in your glory.'

Jesus said to them, 'You do not know
what you are asking.

Are you able to drink
the cup that I drink,
and endure the baptism
with which I am baptised?'

They replied, 'Yes,
we are able.'

Jesus said to them, 'You will indeed drink
the cup that I drink,
and endure the baptism
with which I am baptised.

But to sit
at my right hand
or my left
is not mine to grant.'

When the other disciples
heard of this,
they were indignant
at James and John.

So Jesus
called them all
to him,
and said, 'In this world,
the ones they call leaders
dominate their people,
and the ones they call great
are the ones
that have power
over them.

But it must
not be so
amongst you;
for the truly great
are those who serve;
and the greatest of all
is the one who is
the servant of all.

For even the Son of Man
came
not to be served,
but to serve,
and to give up his life
for all.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 27 OCTOBER

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING – *Jeremiah 31.7-9*

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah.

Sing aloud, with joy,

for the nation;

even as you pray, 'Save us, O Lord,

the last of your people.'

For the Lord says this:

'I will gather them in,

from the lands of the north,

and from far away,

a great multitude;

amongst them

the blind, and the lame,

expectant mothers, and those in labour.

All together, a great assembly,

they will return here.

Weeping, and praying,

they will be gathered in.

And I will lead them

by streams of water,

on a level path,

where they will stumble no more.

For I am a the father

of all my people,

and I care

for the young and the weak

like I care

for my first-born.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Hebrews 7.23-28*

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

The former high priests

were many in number,

because they were prevented by death

from continuing in office.

But Jesus

lives for ever,

and his priesthood

does not

come to an end.

He is able to intercede,

for all time,

on behalf of those who

approach God

through him.

He is holy,

righteous,

undefiled;

set apart now

from sinners,

exalted

above the heavens.

The former high priests

offered sacrifices

day after day,

for their own sins

and for the sins of the people;

but Jesus offered himself,

once for all.

The old law

appointed

high priests who were

subject

to human weakness;

but the new law

appoints

a Son, who is

made perfect

for ever.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 10.46b-52*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

according to Mark.

Jesus and his disciples

were leaving Jericho,

and crowds of people

were following them.

Bartimaeus, a blind beggar,

was sitting by the roadside.

When he heard

that Jesus of Nazareth

was passing by,

he began to shout out:

'Jesus, Son of David,

have mercy on me!'

Many told him to stop,

but he cried out

all the more:

'Jesus, Son of David,

have mercy on me!'

Jesus stopped,

and said, 'Call him.'

So they said

to the blind man, 'Get up,

come forward,

he is calling you.'

Leaving his cloak,

he stood up,

and came forward to Jesus.

Jesus said, 'What do you want me

to do for you?'

The blind man said, 'Teacher,

let me see again.'

Jesus said, 'Go on your way.

Your faith has made you well.'

And immediately,

he regained his sight.

And he joined the crowds

following Jesus

along the road.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 3 NOVEMBER

Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

Fourth Sunday before Advent

All Saints Sunday

FIRST READING – Deuteronomy 6.1-9

A reading from the book of Deuteronomy.

Hear O Israel,

the commandments, laws, and decrees,
that the Lord your God
has commanded me
to teach to you.

You are to keep

these commandments, laws, and decrees,
in the land
that you are now to enter,

so that you,

and your children,
and your children's children,

may honour the Lord your God,

all the days of your life,

and your days may be long,

and you may prosper,

and multiply greatly,

in this land,

flowing with milk and honey,

as promised to you

by the Lord,

the God of your ancestors.

So hear this commandment, O Israel:

the Lord your God is one Lord;

and you shall love the Lord your God

with all your heart,

and with all your soul,

and with all your strength.

Take these words,

that I am commanding you today,

and keep them in your heart.

Teach them to your children.

Recite them at home,

and when you travel.

Recite them

at the end of the day,

and in the morning.

Mark them

on your hand,

and on your forehead;

on your doorposts,

and on your gates.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – Hebrews 9.11-14

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

Christ is the high priest

of the new and eternal covenant.

He has entered the most holy sanctuary,

greater by far

than any

made by human hands.

And he has entered,

not with the blood of sacrificed animals,

but with his own blood,

offering himself to God,

perfect and without sin,

through the eternal Spirit,

securing for us

everlasting forgiveness

and salvation.

Where once

the blood

of a sacrificed animal

was used for purification,

so much more, now, the blood of Christ

purifies our hearts

from all that leads to sin and death,

that we may truly serve and worship

the living God.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Mark 12.28-34a

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

according to Mark.

One of the scribes

approached Jesus,

and asked, 'Which is the greatest,

of all the commandments?'

Jesus said, 'The greatest commandment

is this: "Hear, O Israel,

the Lord your God is one Lord;

and you shall love the Lord your God

with all your heart,

with all your soul, with all your mind,

and with all your strength."

And the second commandment

is this: "You shall love your neighbour

as yourself."

There is no commandment

greater than these.'

The scribe said to Jesus, 'Well spoken, teacher;

for indeed, God is one, and there is no other;

and to love God

with all your heart, understanding, and strength -

and to love your neighbour as yourself -

these two commandments

are more important

than any burnt-offerings or sacrifices.'

Recognising the wisdom in this answer,

Jesus said to the scribe, 'You are not far

from the kingdom of God.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 10 NOVEMBER

Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Third Sunday before Advent

Remembrance Sunday

FIRST READING – 1 Kings 17.8-16

A reading from the first book of Kings.

The Lord directed Elijah

to go to the coastal town
of Sarepta, in Lebanon,
saying, 'I have commanded a widow there
to feed you.'

As Elijah approached the town,
he saw a widow, gathering sticks.

Elijah asked her for a cup of water,
and as she went,
he called after her,
asking also for a piece of bread.

She turned and said to Elijah,

'As the Lord your God lives,
I have nothing baked.
I have only a handful of flour, in a jar,
and a little oil, in a jug.
I am gathering these sticks
so that I may go home,
and prepare all that remains,
for myself and my son,
that we may eat it,
and die.'

Elijah said to her, 'Do not be afraid.

Go, and do as you have said.
But first,
make something, and bring it to me;
and afterwards
make something
for yourself and your son.
For the Lord, the God of Israel, says this:
The jar of flour will not be empty,
and the jug of oil will not run dry,
until the day
the Lord sends rain
on the earth.'

She went and did as Elijah had said,
and she, and Elijah, and her household,
ate for many days;
and the jar of flour was not empty,
and the jug of oil
did not run dry.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – Hebrews 9.24-28

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

The earthly high priest
enters a sanctuary
made

by human hands,
a mere copy
of the true one
in heaven.

But Christ enters into heaven itself,
to appear in the presence of God
on our behalf.

Again and again,
the earthly high priest
enters the holy place,
with the blood of a bull, or a goat,
to offer sacrifice.

But Christ, entering heaven, does not
have to offer himself again and again:
for Christ appears once, at the right time,
to remove all sin, by the one sacrifice
of himself.

Mortals die once,
and face judgement.

And Christ,
having been sacrificed once, for the sins of many,
will appear, on that day,
to welcome many
into salvation.

And we trust in him
for that day.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – Mark 12.38-44

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

Jesus was teaching in the temple,
and a large crowd
was listening to him.

Jesus said, 'Beware of the scribes!

They like to walk around in long robes,
and have people bow down to them in public.

They like to have the best seats in the synagogues,
and places of honour
at banquets.

Yet they cheat widows out of their property,
while for the sake of appearances,
they say long prayers.

They will be judged
most harshly.'

Jesus sat down
opposite the place
where money was offered,
and watched the crowd
putting in
what they had brought.

Many rich people
were giving large sums.

A poor widow came,
and put in
two small coins.

Jesus called his disciples,
and said to them, 'Truly,
this poor widow
has put in more
than all those others.

For they have given
from riches they had to spare;
but she, in her poverty,
has put in
all she had
to live on.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 17 NOVEMBER

*Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time
Second Sunday before Advent*

FIRST READING – *Daniel 12.1-3*

A reading from the book of Daniel.

When the nation faces its greatest distress -
greater than any
since the nations
first came into being -
Michael, the great prince,
the protector of your people, will arise.
And your people will be saved;
all those whose names
are recorded in the book.
Many who have died
will awake to judgement -
some to shame and disgrace,
and some to everlasting life.
Those who have been wise
will shine
with the brightness of heaven.
And those who have
led others to righteousness
will shine, for ever,
like the stars.
This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Hebrews 10.11-14, 19-24*

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

The priest in the earthly temple
offers the same sacrifices,
day after day,
that can never take away sin.
But when Christ offered, for all time,
a single sacrifice for sin,
he sat down at the right hand of God,
and his enemies
became his footstool.
For by his one offering
of himself,
he completed the work
of taking away sin,
in full, and for all time,
so that we can now
enter the most holy place
with confidence.
Christ himself
is the new and living way
into the most holy place,
where once,
only the high priest could enter.
So with Christ as our high priest,
let us approach God with a true heart,
and the full assurance
of our faith,
knowing that we are purified
by his sacrifice.
And then let us continue
to encourage one another,
to love, and to good deeds.
This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *Mark 13.1-13*

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

As Jesus was leaving the temple,
one of his disciples
said, 'Look at these huge stones,
and magnificent buildings!'
Jesus said, 'The day will come
when not one stone
will be left upon another.'
Later, when they were sitting
opposite the temple
at the Mount of Olives,
Peter, James, John, and Andrew
asked him privately, 'When will this happen?
And how will we know?'
Jesus said, 'Take care
that no one misleads you.
Many will come
claiming my name,
and many will be led astray.
And when you hear of wars,
and rumours of wars,
do not be alarmed,
for all this must take place -
but the end is not yet.
Nation will rise against nation,
and kingdom against kingdom;
there will be famines,
and earthquakes;
and these are only the beginnings
of the pains
of new birth.
You will be
handed over to the courts
to be beaten,
and dragged before
governors and kings;
but do not be afraid,
for the Holy Spirit
will give you
the words to say.
You will be hated
because of my name;
brother
will betray brother
to death,
and a father
will betray his child.
Children will rise against parents,
and have them put to death.
But the good news
will be proclaimed
to all nations.
And the one who endures
to the end
will be saved.'
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SUNDAY 24 NOVEMBER

Thirty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Last Sunday before Advent

Christ the King

FIRST READING – *Daniel 7.9-10, 13-14*

A reading from the book of Daniel.

As I watched,

thrones were set in place.

Then,

with hair like wool,

and in robes of

dazzling white,

the Eternal One

appeared,

and was seated

on a throne

of flames,

surrounded

by a great multitude

of attendants,

with even more

standing by.

Then the court assembled,

and the books

were opened.

And as I watched,

one like a Son of Man

appeared

in the clouds of heaven,

and was presented

to the Eternal One,

to receive glory and honour,

and the service

of every nation, people, and language;

glory that will last for ever,

and a kingdom

that will never

pass away.

This is the word of the Lord.

SECOND READING – *Revelation 1.4-8*

A reading from the book of Revelation.

From John, to the seven churches in Asia.

Grace to you, and peace,

from God, who was,

and is, and is to come.

Grace to you, and peace,

from the seven-fold spirit

before the throne of God.

Grace to you, and peace,

from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness,

the first-born from the dead,

the king

far above

all the kings of the earth, who

loves us,

and by his sacrifice

has freed us from our sins,

and has made us to be

a royal priesthood,

serving his God and Father.

To him be honour and glory

for ever!

And look! He is appearing

in the clouds of heaven!

Every eye will see him -

even those who pierced him!

All the nations of the earth

will cry out to him!

'I am the Alpha and the Omega',

says the Lord God,

'the first and the last,

the beginning and the end,

the almighty, who was,

and is, and is to come.'

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL – *John 18.33b-37*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

according to John.

Pilate asked Jesus, 'Are you

the King of the Jews?'

Jesus said, 'Do you ask this for yourself,

or as something that others have said to you?'

Pilate replied, 'I am a Roman, not a Jew.

Your own people

and their chief priests

have handed you over to me.

What is it

that you have done?'

Jesus said, 'My kingdom is not

of this world,

or I would have guards,

fighting to protect me.

My kingdom is not here.'

Pilate said, 'So you are a king!'

Jesus said, 'Those are your words.

I was born, and I came into the world,

to bear witness to the truth.

And everyone who seeks the truth

hears my voice.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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