

Readings for the third Sunday in Advent

Psalm

Psalm 85

Revive Us Again

- ¹LORD, you were favorable | to your land;*
you restored the fortunes of | Jacob.
- ²You forgave the iniquity of your | people;*
you covered | all their sin.
- ³You withdrew | all your wrath;*
you turned from your hot | anger.
- ⁴Restore us again, O God of our sal- | vation,*
and put away your indignation | toward us!
- ⁵Will you be angry with us for- | ever?*
- Will you prolong your anger to all gener- | ations?
- ⁶Will you not revive | us again,*
that your people may re- | joice in you?
- ⁷Show us your steadfast love, | O LORD,*
and grant us your sal- | vation.
- ⁸Let me hear what God the | LORD will speak,*
for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints;
but let them not turn back to | folly.
- ⁹Surely his salvation is near to those who | fear him,*
that glory may dwell | in our land.
- ¹⁰Steadfast love and faith- | fulness meet;*
righteousness and peace kiss each | other.
- ¹¹Faithfulness springs up | from the ground,*
and righteousness looks down | from the sky.
- ¹²Yes, the LORD will give | what is good,*
and our land will yield its | increase.
- ¹³Righteousness will go be- | fore him*
and make his foot- | steps a way.

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 40:1–11

- ¹Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.
²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her

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that her warfare is ended,
that her iniquity is pardoned,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

³A voice cries:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

⁵And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

⁶A voice says, "Cry!"

And I said, "What shall I cry?"

All flesh is grass,
and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.

⁷The grass withers, the flower fades
when the breath of the LORD blows on it;
surely the people are grass.

⁸The grass withers, the flower fades,
but the word of our God will stand forever.

⁹Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good news;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good news;
lift it up, fear not;

say to the cities of Judah,
"Behold your God!"

¹⁰Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
behold, his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.

¹¹He will tend his flock like a shepherd;

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he will gather the lambs in his arms;
he will carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead those that are with young.

Gradual

Psalm 80:1–2

You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, | shine forth.*
Stir up your might and come to | save us!
Give ear, O Shepherd of | Israel,*
you who lead Joseph | like a flock!

Epistle

1 Corinthians 4:1–5

The Ministry of Apostles

¹This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. ²Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy. ³But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. ⁴I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. ⁵Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 11:2–11

²When John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” ⁴And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. ⁶And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”

⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A

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prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is he of whom it is written,

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face,
who will prepare your way before you.’

¹¹Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

Acknowledgments

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