

Readings for the week of December 10, 2023

Sunday:

Is 40:1-5, 9-11/Ps 85:9-10, 11-12, 13-14
(8)/2 Pt 3:8-14/Mk 1:1-8

Monday:

Is 35:1-10/Ps 85:9ab and 10, 11-12, 13-14/
Lk 5:17-26

Tuesday:

Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab/
Jdt 13:18bcde, 19/Lk 1:26-38 or Lk 1:39-47

Wednesday:

Is 40:25-31/Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 8 and 10/
Mt 11:28-30

Thursday:

Is 41:13-20/Ps 145:1 and 9, 10-11, 12-13ab/
Mt 11:11-15

Friday:

Is 48:17-19/Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6/Mt 11:16-19

Saturday:

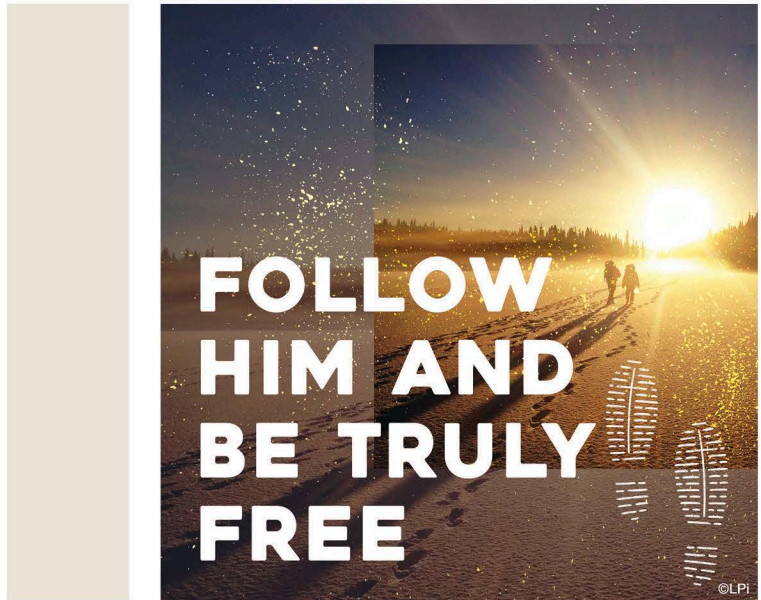
Sir 48:1-4, 9-11/Ps 80:2ac and 3b, 15-16,
18-19/Mt 17:9a, 10-13

Next Sunday:

Is 61:1-2a, 10-11/Lk 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54
(Is 61:10b)/1 Thes 5:16-24/Jn 1:6-8, 19-28



Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.
The English translation of Psalm Responses from Lectionary for
Mass © 1969, 1981, 1997, International Commission on English in
the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.



Gospel Meditation

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

We like to think we are totally free, but the bitter truth is we simply are not. Or better put, our freedom is limited on every side — by governments, corporate giants, physical and mental frailties, genetic shortcomings, and even the boundaries of time and space, and above all, the burden of our sins and pending deaths. In our day, we are perhaps particularly aware that we are not free to disconnect from the technocratic rulers of the air. If you doubt me, try not paying your internet bill and see what happens. We are not totally free.

It's nothing new, of course. In Jesus' day, everyone felt the crushing weight of the Roman Empire. You can say you're free all you want. But try not paying your taxes to Rome and see what happens.

Once we feel this burden in our own lives — however it comes — we are ready to hear the stunning announcement that commences Mark's gospel, **“The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”** It's not a simple perfunctory introduction, but a dramatic announcement of new freedom. The word “gospel” was a political, even military, term. It meant: a great victory has been won and a new king is in charge. This Jesus — not the Roman emperor — is God's son, and he has defeated all that crushes human freedom. It's time to follow him and be truly free. This week let's refuse to submit our freedom to false rulers — especially that of sin. And let's rejoice that Christ is coming to make us perfectly free from all our oppressors.

— *Father John Muir*

(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

The World Is Pregnant

There is a character, Rose of Sharon, in John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* who is pregnant with her first child. As her impoverished family migrates from their native Oklahoma to California, Rose of Sharon's all-consuming preoccupation is her unborn child. Everything she eats, every drink she lets pass her lips, every action she takes — none of it is done without thought for the child that is still so small as to make his mother's expectancy barely discernible to the naked eye.

"For Rose of Sharon was pregnant," wrote Steinbeck. "And the world was pregnant to her."

It is the same for us Christians in the Advent season. We can feel a change coming, and the hope of this change consumes us. It shapes our actions and our plans, we feel it in our hearts and in our souls and in our limbs. From the food we eat to the clothing we wear to the words we use, the unseen Child lives and breathes and works in every small part of this blessed season.

Even the commercial clamor that is the secular "Christmas holiday" cannot fully distract us from the holy sense of anticipation we have. We are baptized, and so it is inside of us, this voice that cries out in the desert. When we hear it, we cannot help but listen.

The Virgin is pregnant, and the world is pregnant to us.

"We await new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells." — 2 Peter 3:13

Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Why do we do that? Catholic Life Explained

Question:

The Bible says that Jesus condemned gambling, but I notice that so many parishes have them at festivals and other events. What's correct?

Answer:

Although Jesus speaks of our relationship with material wealth and the very human struggle with greed, the gospels do not include any specific instructions related to gambling. At the same time, the Church is very sensitive to the needs of those who might struggle with an addiction to gambling, and pastoral care should always be offered to those who struggle with this reality in their life.

While it is true that many parish or school communities include gambling or games of chance in festivals and fundraisers (e.g. bingo, roulette, ring tossing, dunking booths, etc.), there is nothing inherently wrong these sorts of events, given they are played fairly and within the limits of reason are not morally objectionable. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us: "Games of chance (card games, etc.) or wagers are not in themselves contrary to justice. They become morally unacceptable when they deprive someone of what is necessary to provide for his needs and those of others" (no. 2413).

As in all things, moderation and a sense of healthy limits should be applied to gambling and games of chance. For those who find themselves living with addiction to gambling, help is available in various 12-step and addiction recovery programs.

Weekly Prayer

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

A voice cries out:
In the desert prepare the way of the LORD!
Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God!
(Is 40:3)

Psalm:

Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your
salvation. (Ps 85)

Second Reading:

We await new heavens and a new earth
in which righteousness dwells. (1 Pt 1:13)

Gospel:

John the Baptist appeared in the desert
proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the
forgiveness of sins. (Mk 16:4)

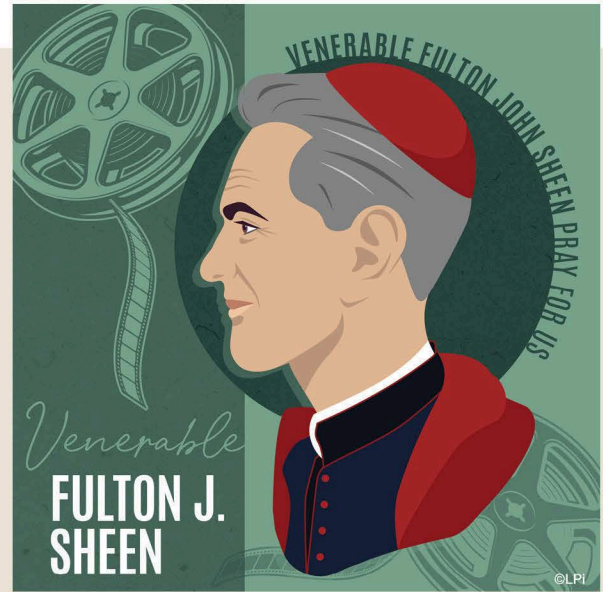
Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD. The English translation of
Psalm Responses from Lectionary for Mass © 1969, 1981, 1997, International Commission on
English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.

Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

Christ is making a journey into each of our hearts
this Advent. Clear away whatever blocks his way.
Make straight the path. Invite him in.

Observances for the week of December 10, 2023

- Sunday:** 2nd Sunday of Advent
- Monday:** St. Damasus I, Pope
- Tuesday:** Our Lady of Guadalupe
- Wednesday:** St. Lucy, Virgin and Martyr
- Thursday:** St. John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor
of the Church
- Next Sunday:** 3rd Sunday of Advent



Saint of the week

Venerable Bishop Fulton John Sheen was a prominent American Catholic bishop, theologian, and media personality. Considered one of the first televangelists, his charisma and defense of the faith made him a household name for American Catholic families.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, source of all holiness, You raise up within the Church in every age men and women who serve with heroic love and dedication. You have blessed Your Church through the life and ministry of Your faithful servant, Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen. He has written and spoken well of Your Divine Son, Jesus Christ, and was a true instrument of the Holy Spirit in touching the hearts of countless people.

If it be according to Your will, for the honor and glory of the Most Holy Trinity and for the salvation of souls, we ask You to move the Church to proclaim him a saint. We ask this prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

(Prayer Source: <https://celebratesheen.com/prayers-2/>)

Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, “Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.”

- Lk 1:41b-42

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

Questions of the Week

Invite Parishioners to Reflect and Respond to Scripture

First Reading

The prophet Isaiah offers comfort and hope to the Israelites who were captive in Babylon in proclaiming that the glory of the Lord is returning to Israel. Do you have family or friends who could use words of encouragement from you?

Second Reading

Peter speaks of being at peace while we wait for the promise of new heavens and a new earth when Christ returns. What gives you peace of mind these days?

Gospel Reading

Fulfilling the prophecies of Isaiah, John the Baptist proclaimed the arrival of Jesus, “one mightier than I...(who) will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” Where do you sense the Holy Spirit present in your life?



Support our local advertisers

Please show your support for your parish by also supporting our advertisers. We wouldn't be able to bring you our bulletin every week without them. Please encourage and remind others to show their support and shop local.

“
TRUST SHOWS
THE WAY.
”

ABBESS, MYSTIC,
COMPOSER, DOCTOR

-ST. HILDEGARD OF BINGEN



The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus.” - Lk 1:30-31

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.