

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Come, Peaceable Kingdom

Almighty God,
you are the giver of peace,
the source of harmony.
Guide us to follow your will
so that we may be united

in thought and act
and look forward to a time
when the wolf is guest of the lamb.
and all the earth knows you.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, December 4, 2022

Kings Rule, God Reigns



Today's readings: Isaiah 11:1–10; Psalm 72:1–2, 7–8, 12–13, 17; Romans 15:4–9; Matthew 3:1–12. Isaiah's prophecy reinforces the vision that a new king will come from the "holy mountain" upon which Jerusalem will be built. The scene that Isaiah imagines is much like the Garden of Eden, where animals have no enemies and the kingdom is peaceful. The prophet puts forth the hope that one day God will reign over the earth and the will of God will bring true harmony and peace.

The refrain for Psalm 72 parallels justice and peace. Peace will result when a king governs with justice, when the poor are rescued and saved. To govern with integrity, the king must be blessed. From that blessing, "all the tribes of

the earth" can be blessed. Listen carefully to this psalm that proclaims that a leader protects and serves those who are defenseless, vulnerable, and victims of injustice. What better way to anticipate the second week of Advent than to find a way to treat with kindness a victim of injustice? What better way to "think in harmony," as St. Paul states in the second reading, than to seek reconciliation with a family member or friend? Keep in mind St. Paul's instruction to "welcome one another, then, as Christ welcomes you."

The reading from Romans today speaks of endurance, encouragement, unity, harmony, and hope. Each day this week, as you contemplate John the Baptist's call to repent, read Romans 15:4–9 and choose a different phrase to ponder.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, December 5

Be Strong and Hope

In the first reading, Isaiah imagines the peaceful wonders that will come to pass when the Son comes to save. Scripture envisions a beautiful and peaceful world, as we glory in salvation. The images of the desert blooming with flowers, the lame leaping, and streams bursting forth in the desert are all ample subjects for quiet reflection as we await the nativity of the Lord. Just as the bystanders to the cure of the paralytic witnessed something “incredible,” so do you during your day. Watch for the incredible. *Today’s readings: Isaiah 35:1–10; Psalm 85:9ab, 10, 11–12, 13–14; Luke 5:17–26.*

Tuesday, December 6

St. Nicholas

“Comfort, give comfort to my people,” begins the reading from Isaiah. These are apt words for the optional Memorial of St. Nicholas, the patron saint of children, prostitutes, sailors, and repentant thieves, among others. To celebrate this day, many traditions have arisen involving candy and small gifts. Some consider St. Nicholas the “real Santa” because of his acts of charity, especially to the poor. Celebrate this fourth-century holy and generous bishop by being kind to another. *Today’s readings: Isaiah 40:1–11; Psalm 96:1–2, 3 and 10ac, 11–13; Matthew 18:12–14.*

Wednesday, December 7

St. Ambrose

In the Gospel today, Jesus invites the crowds to find solace in him, saying, “Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest.” Today too we find hope in these words, knowing that we can give our burdens over to God. On the Memorial of St. Ambrose (340–397), we recall someone who unburdened many people by helping them resolve conflicts. He was an eloquent defender of the faith. *Today’s readings: Isaiah 40:25–31; Psalm 103:1–2, 3–4, 8 and 10; Matthew 11:28–30.*

Thursday, December 8

Immaculate Conception

On the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, the refrain of the responsorial psalm sings of God’s “marvelous deeds,” then the Letter to the Ephesians tells of our adoption by God. Finally, in the Gospel, faith is proclaimed in Mary’s words, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord.” Celebrate Mary’s yes to God through an action for another. *Today’s readings: Genesis 3:9–15; Psalm 98:1, 2–3ab, 3cd–4; Ephesians 1:3–6, 11–12; Luke 1:26–38.*

Friday, December 9

Flowers of Hope

The optional Memorial of St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin is dear to many Mexican Catholics because it celebrates the appearance of Mary to a peasant. After Mary’s appearance, Juan’s cloak was inscribed with the Virgin’s face and filled with flowers. This proved to the bishop that Juan Diego was the Blessed Mother’s messenger and that the bishop should build a shrine at Tepeyac Hill. Juan Diego, canonized in 2002, was the first Catholic indigenous saint from the Americas. Put a fresh flower today on your table and share the story of St. Juan Diego with a friend. *Today’s readings: Isaiah 48:17–19, Psalm 1:1–2, 3, 4 and 6, Matthew 11:16–19.*

Saturday, December 10

Our Lady of Loreto

While lighting the first two candles on your Advent wreath today, make a commitment to continue joyful expectation during Advent. Pray the Rosary or the Magnificat and observe yourself becoming less stressful during this time of many demands from the secular world. Today’s memorial remembers the birthplace of Mary, in Palestine. *Today’s readings: Sirach 48:1–4, 9–11; Psalm 80:2ac and 3b, 15–16, 18–19; Matthew 17:9a, 10–13.*

