

Collect and Readings

Collect of the Day:

Blessed Lord, who caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and the comfort of your holy Word we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Reader: The Old Testament reading is taken from Isaiah 40:1-11

40 Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. ² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. ³ A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴ Every 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. ⁵ And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." ⁶ A 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. ⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the Lord blows on it; surely the people are grass. ⁸ The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever. ⁹ Go on 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!" ¹⁰ Behold, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. ¹¹ He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

Reader: The Word of the Lord. **People:** Thanks be to God.

Reader: This morning's psalm is Psalm 85 read responsively by full verse.

85 Lord, you were favorable to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

² **You forgave the iniquity of your people; you covered all their sin. *Selah***

³ You withdrew all your wrath; you turned from your hot anger.

⁴ **Restore us again, O God of our salvation, and put away your indignation toward us!**

⁵ Will you be angry with us forever? Will you prolong your anger to all generations?

⁶ **Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you?**

⁷ Show us your steadfast love, O Lord, and grant us your salvation.

⁸ **Let 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.**

⁹ Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.

¹⁰ **Steadfast love and faithfulness meet; righteousness and peace kiss each other.**

¹¹ Faithfulness springs up from the ground, and righteousness looks down from the sky.

¹² **Yes, the Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.**

¹³ Righteousness will go before him and make his footsteps a way.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Reader: The Epistle is taken from 2 Peter 3:8-18

⁸ But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. ¹¹ Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, ¹² waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! ¹³ But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. ¹⁴ Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. ¹⁵ And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, ¹⁶ as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures. ¹⁷ You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. ¹⁸ But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Celebrant: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St Mark 1:1-8

People: **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

¹ The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

² As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, ³ the voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,’”

⁴ John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ And he preached, saying, “After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸ I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

Celebrant: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**