

FIRST READING

Zephaniah 3:14-20

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!
YAHWEH has taken away the judgments against you,
and has turned away your enemies.
The Sovereign of Israel, YAHWEH, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.
On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow weak.
YAHWEH, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;
God will rejoice over you with gladness,
and will renew you in love;
YAHWEH will exult over you with loud singing
as on a day of festival.
"I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.
I will deal with all your oppressors
at that time.
And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise and renown
in all the earth.
At that time I will bring you home,
at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes
before your eyes," says YAHWEH.

(Psalm) Isaiah 12:2-6

- ²Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not | be afraid,
for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might, and has become | my salvation.
- ³**With joy you | will draw water
from the wells | of salvation. R**
- ⁴And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the LORD, call | on God's name;
make known the deeds of the LORD among the nations; proclaim that this name | is exalted.
- ⁵**Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done | gloriously;
let this be known in | all the earth.**
- ⁶Shout aloud and sing for joy, O | royal Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy | One of Israel. R

SECOND READING

Philippians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.
Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.
Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with 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.

GOSPEL

Luke 3:7-18

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him,
“You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?
Bear fruits worthy of repentance.
Do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’;
for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham.
Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees;
every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?”
In reply John said to them,
“Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none;
and whoever has food must do likewise.”
Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” John said
to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.”
Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?”
He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation,
and be satisfied with your wages.”

As the people were filled with expectation,
and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah,
John answered all of them by saying,
“I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming,
the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.
He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.
With a winnowing fork in hand, he will clear the threshing floor
and gather the wheat into his granary, burning the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

So, with many other exhortations, John proclaimed the good news to the people.