

Reading 2 2 Peter 3:8-14

Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day. The Lord does not delay his promise, as some regard "delay," but he is patient with you, not wishing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a mighty roar and the elements will be dissolved by fire, and the earth and everything done on it will be found out.

Since everything is to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be, conducting yourselves in holiness and devotion, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved in flames and the elements melted by fire. But according to his promise we await new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, since you await these things, be eager to be found without spot or blemish before him, at peace.

Gospel Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet: Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way. A voice of one crying out in the desert: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths." John the Baptist appeared in the desert proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. People of the whole Judean countryside and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they acknowledged their sins. John was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist. He fed on locusts and wild honey. And this is what he proclaimed: "One mightier than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Noise is a deceptive, addictive, and false tranquilizer. The tragedy of our world is never better summed up than in the fury of senseless noise that stubbornly hates silence. This age detests the things that silence brings us to: encounter, wonder, and kneeling before God.

Visit <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings> to access the weekly and weekend lectionary for Mass readings. Or for print Magnificat, Living with Christ or Word Among Us are available subscriptions.

Smartphone Apps such as Laudete or iMissal are alternative resources to read, listen and pray with the readings prior to the celebration of the Mass.

Basics

A 4 week series of homilies will be delivered during Advent to help you focus, reclaim or discover the little ways that will enhance and deepen your Catholic Christian Life through the Mass.

Part 1 Before Mass

Part 2 Liturgy of the Word

Part 3 Liturgy of the Eucharist

Part 4 After Mass

Week 1 of Advent

Be Intentional - Before Mass

Prepare before you arrive. Each weekend we hear 4 readings from Scripture. For most of us that is a lot to take in all at once. During Advent the focus of the Old Testament, Psalm, New Testament and Gospel are about the broader theme of Advent, which is commemorating Christ's birth and preparing for his second coming. Reading through or listening to the readings ahead of time will help you to digest and more fully receive what God wants to say to you!

Prayer consists of listening to God

Dealing with traffic, bad weather, or even just loading up the family are some of the struggles that make arriving on time for mass difficult. It is so important to understand that being/feeling rushed can affect our disposition at mass and make it more difficult for our minds to be settled. It's simply human that we all need time to calm, relax and orient our attention for worship. If you have ever been late and it was a heavy lift just to get to church on time, you know that it's usually 7-10 minutes before you can breathe, relax and fully engage in the mass.

So make your best effort to **arrive early**. 10 minutes is good, but 15 is ideal. This will allow you time to say hello, find a seat and quiet your heart. Resist the temptation for chit-chat and silence your cell phone. If you don't need it, leave it in your vehicle. This will allow you to be drawn more deeply into the mystery of the Eucharist.

Without Silence God disappears in the noise

Leave the time after mass for longer conversations and fellowship (during the pandemic, this is not advised) It is true that many seniors or people who are alone have little conversation in their daily lives and look forward to spending time visiting with fellow parishioners.

*Provided you have prayed and are prepared for mass, consider the place or space where you choose to have those conversations. Remember to respect that the church is a place of prayer and preparation for all of us.

A SIMPLE GUIDE TO PREPARE FOR MASS

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

Call to mind God's presence and read the Readings for today.

What "tugs at your heart" or speaks to you?

ASK YOURSELF

What is it that you most need from God today?

What are you searching for?

If God was speaking to you today, what do you want to hear?

PRAY

Lord I acknowledge that I need you today. I acknowledge that you brought me here. I give you permission to speak to my heart. I give you permission to fill me up with the Eucharist. Lord Jesus I believe you want to bless me today. Grant me the grace to generously receive all that you desire to give me today.

God's only power is to love silently. He is incapable of any oppressive force. God is love, and love cannot compel, force, or oppress in order to be loved in return.

Reading 1 Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

Comfort, give comfort to my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her service is at an end, her guilt is expiated; indeed, she has received from the hand of the LORD double for all her sins. A voice cries out: In the desert prepare the way of the LORD! Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God! Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill shall be made low; the rugged land shall be made a plain, the rough country, a broad valley. Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Go up on to a high mountain, Zion, herald of glad tidings; cry out at the top of your voice, Jerusalem, herald of good news! Fear not to cry out and say to the cities of Judah: Here is your God! Here comes with power the Lord GOD, who rules by his strong arm; here is his reward with him, his recompense before him. Like a shepherd he feeds his flock; in his arms he gathers the lambs, carrying them in his bosom, and leading the ewes with care.

Responsorial Psalm 85

R. Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

I will hear what God proclaims; the LORD—for he proclaims peace to his people. Near indeed is his salvation to those who fear him, glory dwelling in our land. Kindness and truth shall meet; justice and peace shall kiss. Truth shall spring out of the earth, and justice shall look down from heaven. The LORD himself will give his benefits; our land shall yield its increase. Justice shall walk before him, and prepare the way of his steps.