

First Reading

Zephaniah 3 v 14 - 20

A Song of Joy

¹⁴ Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter
Jerusalem!
¹⁵ The LORD has taken away the judgements against you,
he has turned away your enemies.
The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.
¹⁶ On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak.
¹⁷ The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who
gives victory;
he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew
you in his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing ¹⁸ as on a day of
festival.
I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear
reproach for it.
¹⁹ 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.
²⁰ 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
the LORD.

This is the word of the Lord

Second Reading

Philippians 4 v 4-7

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.
⁵ Let your gentleness be known to everyone.
The Lord is near.
⁶ Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer
and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be
made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which
surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and
your minds in Christ Jesus.

This is the word of the Lord

Gospel

Luke 3 v 7 - 18

⁷ 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? ⁸ 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. ⁹ Even now the axe 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.'

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, 'What then should we
do?' ¹¹ In reply he said to them, 'Whoever has two coats
must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has
food must do likewise.'

¹² Even tax-collectors came to be baptized, and they
asked him, 'Teacher, what should we do?' ¹³ He said to
them, 'Collect no more than the amount prescribed for
you.' ¹⁴ 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.'

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were
questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he
might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John answered all of them by
saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more
powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the
thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy
Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear
his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his
granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable
fire.'

¹⁸ So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the
good news to the people.