

## Readings for November 2, 2008

### FIRST LESSON: Revelation 7:9–17

<sup>9</sup>After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. <sup>10</sup>They cried out in a loud voice, saying,

"Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

<sup>11</sup>And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, <sup>12</sup>singing,

"Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom  
and thanksgiving and honor  
and power and might  
be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

<sup>13</sup>Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" <sup>14</sup>I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal ;they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

<sup>15</sup>For this reason they are before the throne of God,  
and worship him day and night within his temple,  
and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them.

<sup>16</sup>They will hunger no more, and thirst no more;  
the sun will not strike them,  
nor any scorching heat;

<sup>17</sup>for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd,  
and he will guide them to springs of the water of life,  
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

### PSALM: Psalm 34:1–10, 22

I will bless the LORD at all times;  
his praise shall ever be in my mouth.

**<sup>2</sup>I will glory in the LORD;  
let the humble hear and rejoice.**

<sup>3</sup>Proclaim with me the greatness of the LORD;  
let us exalt his name together.

**<sup>4</sup>I sought the LORD, and he answered me  
and delivered me out of all my terror.**

<sup>5</sup>Look upon him and be radiant,  
and let not your faces be ashamed.

**<sup>6</sup>I called in my affliction, and the LORD heard me  
and saved me from all my troubles.**

<sup>7</sup>The angel of the LORD encompasses those who fear him,  
and he will deliver them.

**<sup>8</sup>Taste and see that the LORD is good;  
happy are they who trust in him!**

<sup>9</sup>Fear the LORD, you that are his saints,  
for those who fear him lack nothing.

**<sup>10</sup>The young lions lack and suffer hunger,  
but those who seek the LORD lack nothing that is good.**

<sup>22</sup>The LORD ransoms the life of his servants,  
and none will be punished who trust in him.

### **SECOND LESSON: 1 John 3:1–3**

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. <sup>2</sup>Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. <sup>3</sup>And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

### **GOSPEL: Matthew 5:1–12**

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup>Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

<sup>3</sup>Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>4</sup>Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

<sup>5</sup>Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup>Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

<sup>7</sup>Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

<sup>8</sup>Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

<sup>9</sup>Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

<sup>10</sup>Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>11</sup>Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

## **Readings for November 9, 2008**

### **FIRST LESSON: Amos 5:18–24**

<sup>18</sup>Alas for you who desire the day of the LORD!  
Why do you want the day of the LORD?

It is darkness, not light;  
<sup>19</sup>as if someone fled from a lion,  
and was met by a bear;  
or went into the house and rested a hand against the wall,  
and was bitten by a snake.  
<sup>20</sup>Is not the day of the LORD darkness, not light,  
and gloom with no brightness in it?  
<sup>21</sup>I hate, I despise your festivals,  
and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.  
<sup>22</sup>Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings,  
I will not accept them;  
and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals  
I will not look upon.  
<sup>23</sup>Take away from me the noise of your songs;  
I will not listen to the melody of your harps.  
<sup>24</sup>But let justice roll down like waters,  
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

### **PSALM: Psalm 70**

Be pleased, O God, to deliver me;  
O LORD, make haste to help me.

**<sup>2</sup>Let those who seek my life be ashamed and altogether dismayed;  
let those who take pleasure in my misfortune draw back and be  
disgraced.**

<sup>3</sup>Let those who say to me "Aha!" and gloat over me turn back,  
because they are ashamed.

**<sup>4</sup>Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you;  
let those who love your salvation say forever, "Great is the LORD!"**

<sup>5</sup>But as for me, I am poor and needy;  
come to me speedily, O God.

**<sup>6</sup>You are my helper and my deliverer;  
O LORD, do not tarry.**

### **SECOND LESSON: 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18**

<sup>13</sup>But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about  
those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.

<sup>14</sup>For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus,  
God will bring with him those who have died. <sup>15</sup>For this we declare to you by the  
word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord,  
will by no means precede those who have died. <sup>16</sup>For the Lord himself, with a cry  
of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will  
descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup>Then we who are  
alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the  
Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. <sup>18</sup>Therefore encourage

one another with these words.

**GOSPEL: Matthew 25:1–13**

Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. <sup>2</sup>Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. <sup>3</sup>When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; <sup>4</sup>but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. <sup>5</sup>As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. <sup>6</sup>But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' <sup>7</sup>Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. <sup>8</sup>The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' <sup>9</sup>But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' <sup>10</sup>And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. <sup>11</sup>Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' <sup>12</sup>But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' <sup>13</sup>Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

**Readings for November 16, 2008**

**FIRST LESSON: Zephaniah 1:7, 12–18**

<sup>7</sup>Be silent before the Lord GOD!

For the day of the LORD is at hand;  
the LORD has prepared a sacrifice,  
he has consecrated his guests.

<sup>12</sup>At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps,  
and I will punish the people  
who rest complacently on their dregs,  
those who say in their hearts,  
"The LORD will not do good,  
nor will he do harm."

<sup>13</sup>Their wealth shall be plundered,  
and their houses laid waste.  
Though they build houses,  
they shall not inhabit them;  
though they plant vineyards,  
they shall not drink wine from them.

<sup>14</sup>The great day of the LORD is near,  
near and hastening fast;  
the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter,  
the warrior cries aloud there.

<sup>15</sup>That day will be a day of wrath,  
a day of distress and anguish,

a day of ruin and devastation,  
a day of darkness and gloom,  
a day of clouds and thick darkness,  
<sup>16</sup>a day of trumpet blast and battle cry  
against the fortified cities  
and against the lofty battlements.  
<sup>17</sup>I will bring such distress upon people  
that they shall walk like the blind;  
because they have sinned against the LORD,  
their blood shall be poured out like dust,  
and their flesh like dung.  
<sup>18</sup>Neither their silver nor their gold  
will be able to save them  
on the day of the LORD's wrath;  
in the fire of his passion  
the whole earth shall be consumed;  
for a full, a terrible end  
he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

#### **PSALM: Psalm 90:1–12**

LORD, you have been our refuge  
from one generation to another.

**<sup>2</sup>Before the mountains were brought forth, or the land and the earth  
were born,  
from age to age you are God.**

<sup>3</sup>You turn us back to the dust and say,  
"Go back, O child of earth."

**<sup>4</sup>For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past  
and like a watch in the night.**

<sup>5</sup>You sweep us away like a dream;  
we fade away suddenly like the grass.

**<sup>6</sup>In the morning it is green and flourishes;  
in the evening it is dried up and withered.**

<sup>7</sup>For we consume away in your displeasure;  
we are afraid because of your wrathful indignation.

**<sup>8</sup>Our iniquities you have set before you,  
and our secret sins in the light of your countenance.**

<sup>9</sup>When you are angry, all our days are gone;  
we bring our years to an end like a sigh.

**<sup>10</sup>The span of our life is seventy years, perhaps in strength even  
eighty;**

**yet the sum of them is but labor and sorrow,  
for they pass away quickly and we are gone.**

<sup>11</sup>Who regards the power of your wrath?  
Who rightly fears your indignation?

**<sup>12</sup>So teach us to number our days,  
that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.**

## **SECOND LESSON: 1 Thessalonians 5:1–11**

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. <sup>2</sup>For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. <sup>3</sup>When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! <sup>4</sup>But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; <sup>5</sup>for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. <sup>6</sup>So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; <sup>7</sup>for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. <sup>8</sup>But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. <sup>9</sup>For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>10</sup>who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. <sup>11</sup>Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

## **GOSPEL: Matthew 25:14–30**

<sup>14</sup>For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; <sup>15</sup>to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. <sup>16</sup>The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. <sup>17</sup>In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. <sup>18</sup>But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. <sup>19</sup>After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. <sup>20</sup>Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.'  
<sup>21</sup>His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'  
<sup>22</sup>And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.'  
<sup>23</sup>His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'  
<sup>24</sup>Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; <sup>25</sup>so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.'  
<sup>26</sup>But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? <sup>27</sup>Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received

what was my own with interest. <sup>28</sup>So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. <sup>29</sup>For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. <sup>30</sup>As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

## Readings for November 23, 2008

### FIRST LESSON: Ezekiel 34:11–16, 20–24

<sup>11</sup>For thus says the Lord GOD: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. <sup>12</sup>As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. <sup>13</sup>I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. <sup>14</sup>I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. <sup>15</sup>I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord GOD. <sup>16</sup>I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

<sup>20</sup>Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. <sup>21</sup>Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted at all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide, <sup>22</sup>I will save my flock, and they shall no longer be ravaged; and I will judge between sheep and sheep.

<sup>23</sup>I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. <sup>24</sup>And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken.

### PSALM: Psalm 95:1–7a

Come, let us sing to the LORD;  
let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.

**<sup>2</sup>Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving  
and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.**

<sup>3</sup>For the LORD is a great God,  
and a great king above all gods.

**<sup>4</sup>In his hand are the caverns of the earth,  
and the heights of the hills are his also.**

<sup>5</sup>The sea is his, for he made it,  
and his hands have molded the dry land.

**<sup>6</sup>Come, let us bow down and bend the knee,  
and kneel before the LORD our maker.**

<sup>7</sup>For he is our God,  
and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.

## **SECOND LESSON: Ephesians 1:15–23**

<sup>15</sup>I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason <sup>16</sup>I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. <sup>17</sup>I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, <sup>18</sup>so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, <sup>19</sup>and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. <sup>20</sup>God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup>far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. <sup>22</sup>And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, <sup>23</sup>which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

## **GOSPEL: Matthew 25:31–46**

<sup>31</sup>When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. <sup>32</sup>All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, <sup>33</sup>and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. <sup>34</sup>Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; <sup>35</sup>for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, <sup>36</sup>I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' <sup>37</sup>Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? <sup>38</sup>And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? <sup>39</sup>And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' <sup>40</sup>And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' <sup>41</sup>Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; <sup>42</sup>for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, <sup>43</sup>I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' <sup>44</sup>Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?' <sup>45</sup>Then he will answer

them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' <sup>46</sup>And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

## Readings for November 30, 2008

### FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 64:1–9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,  
so that the mountains would quake at your presence —  
<sup>2</sup>as when fire kindles brushwood  
and the fire causes water to boil —  
to make your name known to your adversaries,  
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!  
<sup>3</sup>When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,  
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.  
<sup>4</sup>From ages past no one has heard,  
no ear has perceived,  
no eye has seen any God besides you,  
who works for those who wait for him.  
<sup>5</sup>You meet those who gladly do right,  
those who remember you in your ways.  
But you were angry, and we sinned;  
because you hid yourself we transgressed.  
<sup>6</sup>We have all become like one who is unclean,  
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.  
We all fade like a leaf,  
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.  
<sup>7</sup>There is no one who calls on your name,  
or attempts to take hold of you;  
for you have hidden your face from us,  
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.  
<sup>8</sup>Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;  
we are the clay, and you are our potter;  
we are all the work of your hand.  
<sup>9</sup>Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,  
and do not remember iniquity forever.  
Now consider, we are all your people.

### PSALM: Psalm 80:1–7, 16–18

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;  
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.  
<sup>2</sup>**In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,  
stir up your strength and come to help us.**

<sup>3</sup>Restore us, O God of hosts;  
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

**<sup>4</sup>O LORD God of hosts,  
how long will you be angered despite the prayers of your people?**

<sup>5</sup>You have fed them with the bread of tears;  
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

**<sup>6</sup>You have made us the derision of our neighbors,  
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.**

<sup>7</sup>Restore us, O God of hosts;  
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

**<sup>16</sup>Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand,  
the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.**

<sup>17</sup>And so will we never turn away from you;  
give us life, that we may call upon your name.

**<sup>18</sup>Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;  
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.**

## **SECOND LESSON: 1 Corinthians 1:3–9**

<sup>3</sup>Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>4</sup>I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, <sup>5</sup>for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind — <sup>6</sup>just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you — <sup>7</sup>so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>8</sup>He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup>God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

## **GOSPEL: Mark 13:24–37**

<sup>24</sup>But in those days, after that suffering,  
the sun will be darkened,  
and the moon will not give its light,

<sup>25</sup>and the stars will be falling from heaven,  
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

<sup>26</sup>Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory. <sup>27</sup>Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

<sup>28</sup>From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. <sup>29</sup>So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. <sup>30</sup>Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place.

<sup>31</sup>Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

<sup>32</sup>But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. <sup>33</sup>Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when

the time will come. <sup>34</sup>It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. <sup>35</sup>Therefore, keep awake — for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, <sup>36</sup>or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. <sup>37</sup>And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."