

# This Weeks Readings

## The Fifth Sunday After the Epiphany

*Sunday, February 5, 2012*

*First Reading [Cindy Lanzetta]*

*Isaiah 40:21-31*

*This passage is one of the most majestic in all of the Old Testament. Its rhetorical questions confront us with great theological issues and answers them with a far-reaching faith. The images and metaphors of these poetic lines may seem dated and even quaint. Yet they still speak to the most scientifically oriented minds of a Creator of this vast universe who is ever present and powerful to those who faithfully wait for God to act. Written during Israel's exile in Babylon, it offered hope for oppressed refugees longing to return to their homeland a thousand miles away.*

*All sit.*

A Reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to live in; who brings princes to naught, and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing. Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth, when he blows upon them, and they wither, and the tempest carries them off like stubble. To whom then will you compare me, or who is my equal? says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high and see: Who created these? He who brings out their host and numbers them, calling them all by name; because he is great in strength, mighty in power, not one is missing. Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the Lord, and my right is disregarded by my God"? Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

*Reader* Here ends the Reading.

## Psalm

*Remain seated.*

*Psalm 147:1-12*

*Laudate Dominum*

*One of the five songs of praise ending the Psalter, this psalm reflects the same mood of waiting in faith for God to act. It celebrates what God has done throughout Israel's long history of a covenant relationship based on God's steadfast love.*

*The earliest examples of "Anglican Chant" are single chants dating from the latter part of the 16th century. They were written by Thomas Tallis and his contemporaries, devised to provide a suitable musical setting for the Psalms, as published in the Book of Common Prayer. The elipses [...] are a direction to pause.*



- 1 Hallelujah! ...  
How good it is to sing praises to our | God! \*  
how pleasant it is to honor him with | praise!
- 2 The Lord rebuilds Je- | rusalem; \*  
he gathers the exiles of | Israel.
- 3 He heals the broken- | hearted \*  
and binds up their | wounds.
- 4 He counts the number of the | stars \*  
and calls them all by their | names.
- 5 Great is our Lord and mighty in | power; \*  
there is no limit to his | wisdom.
- 6 The Lord lifts up the | lowly, \*  
but casts the wicked to the | ground.
- 7 Sing to the Lord with thanks- | giving; \*  
make music to our God upon the | harp.
- 8 He covers the heavens with | clouds \*  
and prepares rain for the | earth;
- 9 He makes grass to grow upon the | mountains \*  
and green plants to serve man- | kind.
- 10 He provides food for flocks and | herds \*  
and for the young ravens when they | cry.
- 11 He is not impressed by the might of a | horse; \*  
he has no pleasure in the strength of a | man;
- 12 But the Lord has pleasure in those who | fear him, \*  
in those who await his gracious favor ...  
Halle- | lujah!

*Second Reading [Anne]*

*1 Corinthians 9:16-23*

*Paul here speaks very personally of his difficult relationship with the Corinthians. The heart of the matter appears to have been his authority as an apostle and the support the Christian community in Corinth gave him. His only purpose was to proclaim the gospel so that as many as possible might come to know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.*

A Reading from Paul's First letter to the Church in Corinth.

If I proclaim the gospel, this gives me no ground for boasting, for an obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel! For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward; but if not of my own will, I am entrusted with a commission. What then is my reward? Just this: that in my proclamation I may make the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my rights in the gospel. For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law) so that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings.

*Reader* Here ends the Reading.

*Holy Gospel*

*Mark 1:29-39*

*Healing the sick and disabled had an important place in Jesus' early ministry in Galilee. It did not seem to matter who needed his help. He cared for every one of whose need he became aware. He did not perform these miracles for any reason other than to proclaim the reign of God's love in human affairs. To maintain this as the one goal of his ministry, he needed to be in constant fellowship with God through prayer.*

*All stand.*

*Priest* The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

*People* Glory to you, Lord Christ.

As soon as he left the synagogue, Jesus entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them. That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. And the whole city was gathered around the door. And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him. In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. And Simon and his companions hunted for him. When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

*Priest* The Gospel of the Lord.

*People* Praise to you, Lord Christ.