

6 December 2020

First reading

Isaiah 40.1–11

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the
Lord's hand
double for all her sins.
A voice cries out:
'In the wilderness prepare the
way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert
a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill
be made low;
the uneven ground shall
become level,
and the rough places a
plain.
Then the glory of the Lord
shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it
together,
for the mouth of the Lord
has spoken.'
A voice says, 'Cry out!'
And I said, 'What shall I
cry?'
All people are grass,
their constancy is like the
flower of the field.
The grass withers, the flower
fades,
when the breath of the Lord
blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.
The grass withers, the flower
fades;
but the word of our God will
stand for ever.
Get you up to a high
mountain,
O Zion, herald of good
tidings;
lift up your voice with
strength,

O Jerusalem, herald of good
tidings,
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
'Here is your God!'
See, the Lord God comes with
might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before
him.
He will feed his flock like a
shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in
his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother
sheep.

Second reading

2 Peter 3.8–15a

A reading from the letters of Peter.

But do not ignore this one
fact, beloved, that with the
Lord one day is like a
thousand years, and a
thousand years are like one
day. The Lord is not slow
about his promise, as some
think of slowness, but is
patient with you, not wanting
any to perish, but all to come
to repentance. But the day of
the Lord will come like a thief,
and then the heavens will pass
away with a loud noise, and
the elements will be dissolved
with fire, and the earth and
everything that is done on it
will be disclosed.
Since all these things are to
be dissolved in this way, what
sort of people ought you to be
in leading lives of holiness and
godliness, waiting for and
hastening the coming of the
day of God, because of which
the heavens will be set ablaze
and dissolved, and the
elements will melt with fire?
But, in accordance with his
promise, we wait for new
heavens and a new earth,

where righteousness is at
home.
Therefore, beloved, while you
are waiting for these things,
strive to be found by him at
peace, without spot or
blemish; and regard the
patience of our Lord as
salvation. So also our beloved
brother Paul wrote to you
according to the wisdom given
to him,

Gospel

Mark 1.1–8

*Hear the gospel of our Lord
Jesus Christ according to
Mark.*

The beginning of the good
news of Jesus Christ, the Son
of God.
As it is written in the prophet
Isaiah,
'See, I am sending my
messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;
the voice of one crying out in
the wilderness:
"Prepare the way of the
Lord,
make his paths straight" ',
John the baptizer appeared in
the wilderness, proclaiming a
baptism of repentance for the
forgiveness of sins. And
people from the whole Judean
countryside and all the people
of Jerusalem were going out
to him, and were baptized by
him in the river Jordan,
confessing their sins. Now
John was clothed with camel's
hair, with a leather belt around
his waist, and he ate locusts
and wild honey. He
proclaimed, 'The one who is
more powerful than I is
coming after me; I am not
worthy to stoop down and
untie the thong of his sandals.
I have baptized you with
water; but he will baptize you
with the Holy Spirit.'