

FIRST READING: Isaiah 1:1,10-20: God tells His people: Become clean (HCSB)

¹The vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem that Isaiah son of Amoz saw during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. ¹⁰Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom! Listen to the instruction of our God, you people of Gomorrah! ¹¹“What are all your sacrifices to Me?” asks the LORD. “I have had enough of burnt offerings and rams and the fat of well-fed cattle; I have no desire for the blood of bulls, lambs, or male goats. ¹²When you come to appear before Me, who requires this from you— this trampling of My courts? ¹³Stop bringing useless offerings. Your incense is detestable to Me. New Moons and Sabbaths, and the calling of solemn assemblies— I cannot stand iniquity with a festival. ¹⁴I hate your New Moons and prescribed festivals. They have become a burden to Me; I am tired of putting up with them. ¹⁵When you lift up your hands in prayer, I will refuse to look at you; even if you offer countless prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are covered with blood. ¹⁶“Wash yourselves. Cleanse yourselves. Remove your evil deeds from My sight. Stop doing evil. ¹⁷Learn to do what is good. Seek justice. Aid the oppressed. Defend the rights of the fatherless. Plead the widow’s cause. ¹⁸“Come, let us discuss this,” says the LORD. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they will be as white as snow; though they are as red as crimson, they will be like wool. ¹⁹If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the good things of the land. ²⁰But if you refuse and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword.” For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

PSALM: Psalm 50:1-8, 22-23 (NIV)

¹The Mighty One, God, the LORD, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to where it sets. ²From Zion, perfect in beauty, God shines forth. ³Our God comes and will not be silent; a fire devours before Him, and around Him a tempest rages. ⁴He summons the heavens above, and the earth, that He may judge His people: ⁵‘Gather to me this consecrated people, who made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.’ ⁶And the heavens proclaim His righteousness, for He is a God of justice. ⁷‘Listen, My people, and I will speak; I will testify against you, Israel: I am God, your God. ⁸I bring no charges against you concerning your sacrifices or concerning your burnt offerings, which are ever before Me. ²²‘Consider this, you who forget God, or I will tear you to pieces, with no one to rescue you: ²³those who sacrifice thank-offerings honour Me, and to the blameless I will show My salvation.’

SECOND READING: Hebrews 11:1-3,8-16: Living by faith in God's promise (EHV)

¹Faith is being sure about what we hope for, being convinced about things we do not see. ²For by this faith the ancients were commended in Scripture. ³By faith we

know that the universe was created by God's word, so that what is seen did not come from visible things. ⁸ By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go to a place that he was going to receive as an inheritance, and he left without knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he lived as a stranger in the Promised Land, as if it did not belong to him, dwelling in tents along with Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. ¹¹ By faith Abraham also received the ability to conceive children, even though Sarah herself was barren and he was past the normal age, because he considered him faithful who made the promise. ¹² And so from one man, and he as good as dead, descendants were born as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand along the seashore. ¹³ One by one, all of these died in faith, without having received the things that were promised, but they saw and welcomed them from a distance. They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. ¹⁴ Indeed, people who say things like that make it clear that they are looking for a land of their own. ¹⁵ And if they were remembering the land they had come from, they would have had an opportunity to return. ¹⁶ Instead, they were longing for a better land—a heavenly one. For that reason, God is not ashamed to be called their God, because He prepared a city for them.

GOSPEL: Luke 12:32-40: Be ready for Christ's return (*LEB*)

³² “Do not be afraid, little flock, because your Father is well pleased to give you the kingdom. ³³ Sell your possessions and give charitable gifts. Make for yourselves money bags that do not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven where thief does not approach or moth destroy. ³⁴ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. ³⁵ “You must be prepared for action and your lamps burning. ³⁶ And you, be like people who are waiting for their master when he returns from the wedding feast, so that when he comes back and knocks, they can open the door for him immediately. ³⁷ Blessed are those slaves whom the master will find on the alert when he returns! Truly I say to you that he will dress himself for service and have them recline at the table and will come by and serve them. ³⁸ Even if he should come back in the second or in the third watch of the night and find them like this, blessed are they! ³⁹ But understand this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief was coming, he would not have left his house to be broken into. ⁴⁰ You also must be ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not think He will come.”