

**FIRST READING: Daniel 7:1-3,15-18** Daniel's vision of the holy ones of the Most High (NIVUK)

**7** In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream, and visions passed through his mind as he was lying in bed. He wrote down the substance of his dream. <sup>2</sup> Daniel said: 'In my vision at night I looked, and there before me were the four winds of heaven churning up the great sea. <sup>3</sup> Four great beasts, each different from the others, came up out of the sea. <sup>5</sup> 'I, Daniel, was troubled in spirit, and the visions that passed through my mind disturbed me. <sup>16</sup> I approached one of those standing there and asked him the meaning of all this. 'So he told me and gave me the interpretation of these things: <sup>17</sup> "The four great beasts are four kings that will rise from the earth. <sup>18</sup> But the holy people of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it for ever – yes, for ever and ever."

## **PSALM 149**

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD. <sup>[a]</sup> Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise in the assembly of his faithful people. <sup>2</sup> Let Israel rejoice in their Maker; let the people of Zion be glad in their King. <sup>3</sup> Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with tambourine and harp. <sup>4</sup> For the LORD takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with victory. <sup>5</sup> Let his faithful people rejoice in this honour and sing for joy on their beds. <sup>6</sup> May the praise of God be in their mouths and a double-edged sword in their hands, <sup>7</sup> to inflict vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples, <sup>8</sup> to bind their kings with fetters, their nobles with shackles of iron, <sup>9</sup> to carry out the sentence written against them – this is the glory of all his faithful people. Praise the LORD.

**SECOND READING: Ephesians 1:11-23** God's blessings through Christ for his people (NIVUK)

<sup>1</sup> In him we were also chosen, <sup>[a]</sup> having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, <sup>12</sup> in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. <sup>13</sup> And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, <sup>14</sup> who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption

of those who are God's possession – to the praise of his glory.<sup>15</sup> For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people,<sup>16</sup> I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.<sup>17</sup> I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit<sup>[b]</sup> of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.<sup>18</sup> I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people,<sup>19</sup> and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength<sup>20</sup> he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,<sup>21</sup> far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.<sup>22</sup> And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,<sup>23</sup> which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

**GOSPEL: Luke 6:20-31** Blessed are the poor and the persecuted (NIVUK)

<sup>20</sup> Looking at his disciples, he said: 'Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. <sup>21</sup> Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh. <sup>22</sup> Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. <sup>23</sup> 'Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets. <sup>24</sup> 'But woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort. <sup>25</sup> Woe to you who are well fed now, for you will go hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep. <sup>26</sup> Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets. <sup>27</sup> 'But to you who are listening I say: love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, <sup>28</sup> bless those who curse you, pray for those who ill-treat you. <sup>29</sup> If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. <sup>30</sup> Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. <sup>31</sup> Do to others as you would have them do to you.