



Prayer of the Day

Lord Jesus Christ, give ear to our prayers, and lighten the darkness of our hearts by your gracious visitation; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

First Reading: Zephaniah 3:14-20

¹⁴“Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! ¹⁵The LORD has taken away the judgments against you; he has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall never again fear evil. ¹⁶On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Fear not, O Zion; let not your hands grow weak. ¹⁷The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing. ¹⁸I will gather those of you who mourn for the festival, so that you will no longer suffer reproach. ¹⁹Behold, at that time I will deal with all your oppressors. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. ²⁰At that time I will bring you in, at the time when I gather you together; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes,” says the LORD.

Lessons for Next Week: Micah 5:2-5a; Psalm 80:1-7;
Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45 [46-56]

Psalm 85

- ¹You have been gracious to your | land, O LORD,*
you have restored the good for- | tune of Jacob.
- ²**You have forgiven the iniquity | of your people*
and blotted out | all their sins.**
- ³You have withdrawn | all your fury*
and turned yourself from your wrathful | indignation.
- ⁴**Restore us then, O | God our Savior;*
let your anger de- | part from us.**
- ⁵Will you be displeased with | us forever?*
- will you prolong your anger from | age to age?
- ⁶**Will you not give us | life again,*
that your people may re- | joice in you?**
- ⁷Show us your mer- | cy, O LORD,*
and grant us | your salvation.
- ⁸**I will listen to what the LORD | God is saying,*
for he is speaking peace to his faithful people
and to those who turn their | hearts to him.**
- ⁹Truly, his salvation is very near to | those who fear him,*
that his glory may dwell | in our land.
- ¹⁰**Mercy and truth have | met together;*
righteousness and peace have | kissed each other.**
- ¹¹Truth shall spring up | from the earth,*
and righteousness shall look | down from heaven.
- ¹²**The LORD will indeed | grant prosperity,*
and our land will | yield its increase.**
- ¹³Righteousness shall | go before him,*
and peace shall be a pathway | for his feet.

Second Reading: Philippians 4:4-7

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. ⁵Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; ⁶do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Gospel: Luke 7:18-28 [29-35]

¹⁸The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John, ¹⁹calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" ²⁰And when the men had come to him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?'" ²¹In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight. ²²And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. ²³And blessed is the one who is not offended by me." ²⁴When John's messengers had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ²⁵What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are dressed in splendid clothing and live in luxury are in kings' courts. ²⁶What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷This is he of whom it is written, 'Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.' ²⁸I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." [²⁹(When all the people heard this, and the tax collectors too, they declared God just, having been baptized with the baptism of John, ³⁰but the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.) ³¹"To what then shall I compare the people of this generation, and what are they like? ³²They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not weep.' ³³For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' ³⁴The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' ³⁵Yet wisdom is justified by all her children."]