



Archdiocese of St. Louis
Office of Sacred Worship
Lectio Divina
December 18
Lectionary: 194

Read the following passage four times.

- The first reading, simply read the scripture and pause for a minute. Listen to the passage with the ear of the heart. Don't get distracted by intellectual types of questions about the passage. Just listen to what the passage is saying to you, right now.
- The second reading, look for a key word or phrase that draws your attention. Notice if any phrase, sentence or word stands out and gently begin to repeat it to yourself, allowing it to touch you deeply. No elaboration. In a group setting, you can share that word/phrase or simply pass.
- The third reading, pause for 2-3 minutes reflecting on "*Where does the content of this reading touch my life today?*" Notice what thoughts, feelings, and reflections arise within you. Let the words resound in your heart. What might God be asking of you through the scripture? In a group setting, you can share your reflection or simply pass.
- The fourth reading, pause for 2-3 minutes reflecting on "*I believe that God wants me to today/this week.*" Notice any prayerful response that arises within you, for example a small prayer of gratitude or praise. In a group setting, you can share your reflection or simply pass.

Reading

Is 41:13-20

I am the LORD, your God, who grasps your right hand; It is I who say to you, "Fear not, I will help you." Fear not, O worm Jacob, O maggot Israel; I will help you, says the LORD; your redeemer is the Holy One of Israel. I will make of you a threshing sledge, sharp, new, and double-edged, To thresh the mountains and crush them, to make the hills like chaff. When you winnow them, the wind shall carry them off and the storm shall scatter them. But you shall rejoice in the LORD, and glory in the Holy One of Israel.

The afflicted and the needy seek water in vain; their tongues are parched with thirst. I, the LORD, will answer them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. I will open up rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the broad valleys; I will turn the desert into a marshland, and the dry ground into springs of water. I will plant in the desert the cedar, acacia, myrtle, and olive; I will set in the wasteland the cypress, together with the plane tree and the pine, That all may see and know, observe and understand, That the hand of the LORD has done this, the Holy One of Israel has created it.



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Responsorial Psalm

Ps 145:1 and 9, 10-11, 12-13ab

R. (8) The Lord is gracious and merciful; slow to anger, and of great kindness.

I will extol you, O my God and King and I will bless your name forever and ever. The LORD is good to all and compassionate toward all his works.

R. The Lord is gracious and merciful; slow to anger, and of great kindness.

Let all your works give you thanks, O LORD, and let your faithful ones bless you. Let them discourse of the glory of your Kingdom and speak of your might.

R. The Lord is gracious and merciful; slow to anger, and of great kindness.

Let them make known to men your might and the glorious splendor of your Kingdom. Your Kingdom is a Kingdom for all ages, and your dominion endures through all generations.

R. The Lord is gracious and merciful; slow to anger, and of great kindness.



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Alleluia

See Is 45:8

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Let the clouds rain down the Just One, and the earth bring forth a Savior.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

Mt 11:11-15

Jesus said to the crowds: "Amen, I say to you, among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than he. From the days of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent are taking it by force. All the prophets and the law prophesied up to the time of John. And if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah, the one who is to come. Whoever has ears ought to hear."