

2016 November

Click on a date to view reflections

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

These reflections are brought to you by the seminarians at
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Readings: Rev 7:2-4, 9-14, 1Jn 3:1-3, Mt 5:1-12

Today we celebrate All Saints' Day, a day dedicated to the heroic lives of the Saints who are exemplary to everyone. They are venerated for their virtues they practiced in their lives in the face of strangeness and unfamiliarity to the Gospel. These saints found their salvation in and through Christ. God in his love has chosen all people despite their creed, cult, culture, caste, religion, linguistic differences and social status. Everyone participates in Christ's mission visibly or invisibly. The first reading speaks about the saints as those who have faced great trials in life and become models for us. St. John, in the second reading, speaks of the parental relationship of God as our father and we his children. This relationship is united by love. Therefore, why are we unable to love God just as the saints did?

Mother Teresa began the charity works in a tiny way but today we can visualize how it has grown. It was possible because she consciously made a choice in her life. Becoming a saint is not a job but a call to be perfect as the Father. The Gospel reading is about the Sermon on the Mount; here Jesus contrasts two qualities. If you are spiritually poor, mourning, meek, doing God's will, merciful, pure in heart, peaceful and encountering the persecution, the other face of it is the fruit which you will enjoy: the kingdom of God, comfort, satisfaction, God's mercy and seeing God. St. John says, "When he is revealed, we will be like him." To be like him let us prepare deliberately to face our day-to-day trials in hope.

Balaraj K csc

[Back to Calendar](#)

Readings: Wis 3:1-9; Rom 6:3-9; Mt 25:31-46

Today the Church remembers those who have died and are in need of our prayers to attain beatific vision. As we contemplate on the mystery of death, it is appropriately fitting to reflect on what justifies us before God on our judgment day. The parable in today's Gospel gives us the *Do's* in order to enter eternal life. It is crystal clear that God will not judge us on how knowledgeable, famous or wealthy we are but on the response we have given to human need.

Firstly, the *Do's* that Jesus gives in the parable are simple which everyone can do. It is not difficult to give a hungry man a meal, a thirsty man a glass of water, welcoming a stranger, comfort the sick or visit the prisoners.

Secondly, Jesus tells that the "Dos" that we are doing must be uncalculating, natural and instinctive without any hidden motive of being given praise and thanks and publicity. Thirdly, Jesus confronts us with the wonderful truth that insomuch as we do it to the least of his brethren, we do it to him. In a word, what merits us eternal life is generosity- the generosity to help people in simplest things and in a simplest way.

Bilingshar Syiemlieh csc

[Back to Calendar](#)

Readings: Phil 3:3-8a; Lk 15:1-10.

Who is the lost Sheep or coin? Whenever we hear these parables, we may place ourselves in the flock of the ninety-nine who do not need to repent. I think this passage will become more meaningful only when we identify ourselves with the lost sheep. I mean the lost sheep is not a third person but you and me. Jesus is the good shepherd; by his death he liberates us from sin and by his resurrection he opens for us the way to a new life. However, all of us are the lost sheep and Jesus is in search of us to find us. I only need to let myself be found and drag myself to his presence.

The lesson Jesus gives to the Pharisees is also applicable for most of us; We cannot simply throw away the wrongdoers from among us. The Lord wants each one of us to love them as he has loved us and we must rejoice to bring back home the lost sheep or to recover the lost coin.

Prasanta Basumatary csc

Readings: Phil 3:17-4:1; Lk 16:1-8

Today's readings are inviting us to be God-centered people. As the saying goes: when wealth is lost, nothing is lost, when health is lost something is lost, but when character is lost everything is lost. We hear in the gospel reading the character of the steward and his wise decision. Jesus is not concerned about condemning the improper action of the administrator, but rather he appreciates the cleverness of the steward. This man discovered in time that friends last longer than the wealth. On the contrary Jesus tells each one of us that we should detach from worldly things and be attached to God. There is always intrinsic desire in every human being to accumulate things because we reckon that only the worldly things can give us real happiness in our life and forget the love of God, who is the ultimate happiness of our life. Eventually, Jesus is inviting each one of us to be responsible for our life because he has given us the free will to choose to live our life. Thus, we are called to be God-centered people.

Jesu Manickam csc

Readings: Phil 4:10-19; Lk. 16:9-15

God loves the faithful and joyful giver. The readings of the day narrate how one should live the life worthy of his/her vocation. In the gospel reading, Jesus speaks of polarity, duality of human nature: love of God, love of wealth (Lk. 16:13). Nevertheless, we can't reach the heights of loving God if our basic needs are not met. As it is said, 'we can't preach to the hungry stomachs.' We need, as human beings, wealth or material to sustain our daily life and to live in this secularised modern world. In this situation, is it too hard for us to distinguish between these two - God and wealth? Can we love God without wealth or in spite of much wealth one has accumulated?

Answering to this, St. Paul, in today's first reading declares "I can do anything through him who strengthens me" (Phil 4:13). He says that he could live in any situation or circumstance of his life that comes along. He has learned to be contented with whatever he has received. This is the spirit of discipleship. We are called to be people full of life and hope and joyful, not complaining or murmuring of our choices that we had made to be followers of Christ. A true disciple is one, who is contented with whatever he has, and living a balanced life without neglecting the world. It is important to realise that through the grace of God alone we can achieve it. Thus, the readings invite us to be an aroma, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. Let our prayer be, as Pope Francis said, that we become true servants being on the streets, shepherds with the smell of the sheep of Christ.

S. Lawrence csc

[Back to Calendar](#)

Readings: 2 Mac 7:1-2, 9-14; 2Thes 2:16-3:5; Lk 20:27-38

The theme of today's reading is "trusting in God's providence". Through today's readings Jesus tells us that we must live in communion with him, even at the time of crisis and destruction. This world may fail us but his love will never fail us; even if we die we will rise once again with him. As Christians, "Resurrection for us is a daily event. We know that we walk by Easter's first light and it makes us long for its fullness." (Constitutions of the CSC 119).

In this modern world people have substituted faith in God with faith in different gadgets which give us temporary joy. Even priests and religious are drawn towards this worldly way of living. We have become like those Pharisees who see life here on earth as more important than the life in abode of Jesus Christ where there is everlasting happiness. That was why Jesus challenged those Pharisees saying that the life in him is different from the life on earth.

Saints and martyrs are examples for each one of us to live a faithful life in Jesus alone. They owned nothing in this world but owned everything in heaven. This was experience of those seven brothers about whom we hear in the first reading, who kept up their faith even at the cost of death.

Therefore, let us ask ourselves whether we have the real faith in Jesus alone, especially in times of destruction and problems? Or am I just pretending to be a follower of him? Let us ask Jesus to strengthen our faith and hope in him alone.

Raphael Hasdak csc

[Back to Calendar](#)

Readings: Titus 1: 1-9; Lk 17: 1-6

The Lord is near to his little (chosen) ones. Who are all his little ones and why is the Lord angry towards those who sin against them? We are the people of God and we are his little ones; we have been called by his name and washed by his blood to be the carriers of his love to the humanity. By the baptism we all were called to be the shepherd of his flock. The Lord is not only giving us the task but also rules to do it. To be his chosen ones we must cloth ourselves with hospitality, love, goodness, calmness, honesty, holiness, and self-control and when we are clothed with these we will be able to be shepherds even with our own human limitations. It's our readiness to be his that will provide us the real faith, and credit as his chosen one.

Philosan S csc

Readings: Titus 2:1-8, 11-14, Lk 17:7-10

What we are is God's gift and what we become is our gift to God. The very purpose of our life is to be at the service of others. The readings of the day present the theme: 'Selfless Service'. Selfless service is giving ourselves fully to others without expecting anything in return.

The first reading says that the core of our life is to know God and to serve him faithfully. Knowing God and serving him is the duty of everyone—whether young or old. Although God does not need our service, yet our desire to serve him is His gift. All of us, therefore, are invited to live a righteous and virtuous life according to the laws in order to fulfil the purpose of our life. The purpose of our life is not to be served but to serve. Mark 10:45 reads "For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."

In the gospel reading, throughout the parable of the dutiful servant, we see that Jesus expects us to offer selfless service to one another. Service is not to be done in expectation for rewards and gifts. We are to serve God and others selflessly and generously. Each one of us must discover the God-given gifts and use them for the service of others. 1Pet 4:10 reads "*Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.*" The way we share our own life to give life and light to others is our gift to God. Therefore, let us offer this life for the service of others and become faithful servants of God.

Chinnaiah Saripudi csc

[Back to Calendar](#)

Readings: Ezek 47:1-2, 8-9; Jn 2: 13-22

“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, which you have from God and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body” (1Cor 6: 19-20).

Temple signifies the presence of the Lord. Jesus goes to the temple as a common man and realizes that the temple is changed into a market place. Having observed the entire scenario, Jesus gets angry and says, “Take these things out of here! Stop making my father’s house a market place!”

As Jesus spoke of the temple which is his own body, St. Paul too says that our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Keeping the temple clean, which is our own body, would allow the Spirit of the Lord to dwell within us always. The question we need to ponder over is: when Jesus visits my home, how clean is my home for Him to dwell in? Will Jesus who laid down his own life for us on the cross get angry again by looking at my home as he was when looking at the temple of Jerusalem?

It is a personal invitation for us to realize the presence of God within us always and maintain his temple as pure as snow. Hence it will be more pleasing for the Holy Spirit to dwell in us, in whose presence no other power can destroy the temple. And today as we celebrate the feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica, let us also re-dedicate our bodies to the Lord.

Siju Pappachan csc

[Back to Calendar](#)

Readings: Phlm 7-20; Lk 17: 20-25

The Kingdom of God is not yet to be established. And we are not waiting for it to be established in the future. We only wait for the second coming of the Christ. Because when Jesus came the last time itself he brought the Kingdom to us. And 'it is not out there or here but its within you,' says the Lord. So, what is the Kingdom of God which is within me and you? According to me the Kingdom of God is where the God of mercy and love dwells and where the patience and serenity are found. It is the place where we find many sinners who are striving to come back to the Lord or to change themselves from their evil way of living, and where the God who is merciful accept them with great joy and with kind heart. And if asked whether I practice this Kingdom of God in my life, my answer would be "not fully," "may be to some extent." Accepting my human weakness, I try to build this Kingdom in my life and in others. If the same question is put to you, what would your answer be?

Arockia Raj G. csc

Readings: 2Jn: 4-9; Lk 17: 26-37

Walking in the life of truth is the greatest achievement of a person. But when someone walks according to the commandment of Christ, it becomes a blessing for the person as well as for the community to which he or she belongs. This commandment is nothing but “love one another”. This commandment assures its followers the unbreakable bond with God the creator. Being in relation with God is a blessing given to us by God himself. Thus one can achieve many things in life but not blessing, and it is the same with regard to someone’s love. Therefore, enjoying others’ love and sharing our own love with others is a blessing we receive from others and give to others. Through the Gospel reading Jesus challenges us saying, one might lose his or her life while trying to walk according to Lord’s commandment. But that is the only path that can lead us to the union with God. Therefore both the readings of the day invite us to be prepared to lose what we consider very important in order to achieve which we can never lose in our life or after our life on earth.

John Kennedy csc

Readings: 3 Jn 5-8; Lk 18: 1-8

Today's gospel reading invites each of us to be persistent in our prayer. Jesus uses the example of a widow to convey the importance of perseverance. If we wish to achieve something important in our lives, then we must follow the example of the widow. Even the judge who had no fear of God finally gave into the persistence of the widow. Persistence is a common human experience that we come across at many junctures of our lives. Our persistence moves people to pay attention to our problems, pleas and our needs. This experience is found within the family; between parents and children, in schools between teachers and students, on the roads between traffic police and the persons who break the traffic rules, and the list goes on.

Now, imagine how much will a God show concern for the people whom he has chosen out of love. In the Gospel Jesus is assuring all of us that his Father will always listen to the supplications of his people. Father knows the hearts and minds of his children. The only thing we need to keep in mind is that we should persistently approach him with humility and sincerity.

Rajashekhar csc

[Back to Calendar](#)

Readings: Mal 3:19-20; 2 Thes 3:7-12; Lk 21:5-19

Waiting is a strong topic in today's readings. In the Gospel of Luke, the disciples will be persecuted and will suffer in their waiting for Jesus' return. Also, in Paul's Letter to the Thessalonians we hear that some Christians have been waiting 'idly' or as 'busybodies.' As we approach the season of Advent, it is good to contemplate on our understanding of what it means to wait for something. How do Christians wait? Christians do not wait anxiously or 'idly' or as 'busybodies' because waiting is participating in what will come. All of life is a great Advent—a great waiting. In waiting, we participate in what is to come. Christians do not waste time, but rather, we sanctify time because we know what is to come. For example, a wedding day would not be as special without the preparation that comes before. If the wedding took place a few days after the engagement, something would be missing. If a new couple awoke the day after their wedding with a freshly born infant, the child might seem like a stranger to them because they did not anticipate its arrival. If they did not go through the nine months of excitement and waiting, the experience of welcoming the child into their home would be strange. The psalmist says; 'The Lord comes to rule the earth with justice.' Yes, the Lord will come in the future, but he also comes to us now, in the Eucharistic meal and in the love we show each other. Therefore, when Christ returns we are prepared to welcome Him because we have waited—as Christians wait. Let us wait for the Lord, but in our waiting may we realize that we participate now—in the present—in what is to come in the future.

Brendan McAleer csc

[Back to Calendar](#)

Readings: Rev 1:1-4, 2:1-5; Lk 18:35-43

Today we hear in the Gospel reading the healing of blind Bartimaeus. It is very evident that when blind Bartimaeus hears that Jesus is passing by, he gets up and amidst all the struggles and challenges he calls out to Jesus for healing. It is blind Bartimaeus' personal choice and strong faith that made him healed. During Jesus' time the blind were kept away from the community of people. Jesus restores not only physical healing but restores the identity of Bartimaeus as the part of community and therefore he, along with the crowd that followed Jesus, praised God.

It is very true God created the whole universe; God has the power over everything. Though he is all powerful, God respects individual freedom. God values our choice. In every book of the Bible we see God giving full freedom to make one's own choice. If the choice that one makes is in line with that of the 'Will of God' there is a positive result.

Let us be a constant seeker of God's will in our daily life. Today I am called to discern the will of God in my daily life. Every choice that I make, I am entrusted with the responsibility to accept the consequence. In 'Discerning God's will in my daily life' is where my vocation lies. In this process, I am not left alone; there the Jesus always passes by, through our companions, colleagues, fellow workers or anyone whom we meet in our daily life.

Joyson John csc

[Back to Calendar](#)

Readings: Rev 3:1-6, 14-22; Lk 19:1-10

“Anyone who believes in Christ is anew creation. The old is gone, the new has come.” (2 Cor 5:17)

Readings of the day invites us to reflect upon the theme ‘change within the change.’ We see in the gospel reading how a sinner Zacchaeus changed from within him to become a follower of Jesus. We often say that one must change oneself for better. Zacchaeus was a wealthy person in his locality, but he was lacking something in his life, which he has not experienced, but what made him to change his life. To change ourselves we need to wait for years accepting oneself and our weakness.

In our lives too same thing happens. We have everything like power, knowledge; wealth and so on. But still what we lack is God’s presence in our life, that which makes us happy. Jesus is always with us, but we don’t recognize him. So the word of God invites each one of us to become like Zacchaeus who was eager to see Jesus and to change ourselves, for the good of the other. Can we become another Zacchaeus in this society?

Bonaventure lobo csc

[Back to Calendar](#)

Readings: Rev. 4:1-11; Lk.19:11-28

The first reading speaks about Lord who is the master of this universe, he has power over the earth; we give him glory and honour him. The gospel reading speaks of individual responsibility, when we get something to do, whether it is big or small, a lot depends on how we do it. When we give more importance for the small things and do them well, then in the future we are given bigger or greater things to do. It all depends on us: how we do the things and not what we do. When we do the smaller things with greater interest, then the one who has given us a particular work gets a good impression about us and he gives us bigger things in the future. Whatever we do in our life, we need to do it with full interest and we need to give ourselves fully, then only we can expect good results out of it. God gives us plenty of opportunities, it is the Satan who blocks us from doing good. When we remove the blocks in our life then we can do better things in life and the one who gave the work do to will give us bigger roles to fulfil.

Vijith Mathias csc

[Back to Calendar](#)

Readings: Rev 5:1-10; Lk 19:41-44

God chose prophets, judges, and kings in order to liberate people from the bondage, some succeeded in their mission which was entrusted to them and some failed, however they prepared the way for the messiah with their strengths and limitations. People of Israel in their reflection for the reason for their exile realized that they did not need kings but a servant who would rule over them. Today's first reading and gospel speaks of that servant who was worthy to open the scroll and to stand before God on behalf of his people. As prince of peace Jesus made numerous attempts to win over his people but his attempts were futile, and he cries for his people. Walls would not protect us from our inner bondage. What can protect us from the bondage is running towards the protecting wing of Jesus which all of us are invited to do by the readings of the day.

Wilfred Dias csc

Readings: Rev 10: 8-11; Lk 19:45-48

The liturgy of the word today tells us who we are, how we are to be and what we are to be.

Who we are: We are the hearers of the word of God. We hear in the First reading that we are called to eat the word of God which, though it is sweet as honey, yet will be bitter to the stomach, meaning to say that it is easy for us just to listen to the sweet words of the Lord but difficult to digest or live it.

How we are to be: How do we become after we live and digest the word of God? Very often we just let the word of God enter through one ear and go out from another ear. We refuse to let it enter our hearts and we allow the worldly words to enter which corrupt our pure hearts. Our hearts are meant to be temples of the Holy Spirit. We hear today from the Gospel reading that Jesus rises in anger and casts out those who misused the temple of God instead of making it as a house of prayer. At times, we let our hearts be corrupted by our anger, hatred, jealousy, and gossip and so on. How much would Jesus feel when we misused the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit instead of keeping it pure and gentle?

What we are to be: We are called to consume and listen to the word of God, and to let it touch our hearts. We are invited to take up the challenge to resist the worldly words that corrupt the heart: the dwelling place of Holy Spirit. It's a call for us to cling to the words and teachings of Christ and proclaim the word of God far and near. That's the invitation from today's liturgy for all of us.

Lawrence Wanniang csc

[Back to Calendar](#)

Readings: Rev 11: 4-12; Lk 20: 27-40

Every Christian is called to be a witness of Christ's love-filled life in word and deed to everyone and everything in this world. And Christ's witness is someone who stands up for Christ even when standing up is not easy. The first reading gives us the glimpse of brave testimony of two such witnesses who didn't even mind dying for Christ fighting the beast. Their witness is not just a tale to be told our children. It is a reminder of our moral responsibility as Christ's witnesses who are called to fight the beasts in our present time. For a long time we may have not realised the beasts of individualism and corruption that have crawled into our lives and have begun to rule the roost. These beasts are destroying not just our relationships with one another and nature, but our society as a whole. Thus, it is time to wake up; time to be true witnesses of Christ and time to fight the beasts. Most of all, it is time to believe in resurrection and rise from our graves of fear and selfishness for we believe in *"not the God of the dead, but of the living: for all live to him"*.

Richard csc

[Back to Calendar](#)

Readings: 2Sam 5:1-3; Col 1:12-20; Lk 23:35-43

Readings of today call us to remain humble, obedient and completely surrender to God's plan. Crucifixion was given to robbers or murderers or who break the law of the land. Jesus does not come under any category to be crucified but still it was God's plan to redeem humanity through his son's blood. His final journey towards his father was that he had to go through that cross which was rejected by everyone. He was hung upon it between two thieves. One thief recognizes divinity in Jesus, but the other thief fails to recognize divinity in Jesus. Rejection of Jesus by the thief on the cross was not a symbol of salvation. The other thief accepted Jesus on the cross and here Jesus became the symbol of salvation. Thus, the gospel of the day invites us to call on Jesus as the repented thief called him: "Remember me in your kingdom".

Roshan Minin D'Souza csc

Readings: Zech 2:14-17; Math 12: 46-50

The Memorial of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary invites us to share in the traditional faith dimension that Mary the immaculate one, the temple of the living God, was offered to the Almighty in his holy house in Jerusalem. This willing and authentic act of Mary paved the way for the salvation of all human races. In presenting herself as a living Temple of God, she very well knows the joys and sufferings that could come her way in accomplishment of God's plan. Yet, she remained as a holy temple of God and did not yield to the desires of the world. The Benedictus antiphon of the day helps us to understand how Mary a young woman remained faithful in keeping her promise to God. It states "*Blessed are you Mary because you believed that all those things which were said to you by the Lord would be fulfilled.*" Come, what may, her trust in Yahweh was so firm that she could endure all the difficulties and remain ever immaculate. By our vows, we too are called to do God's work like Mother Mary. But often, we are pushed back by the waves of this current world. Dedication for God's work requires spiritual acknowledgement of joys and sorrows in and through the eyes of faith. Only then, we will be able to fulfill God's plan in our lives. Let us therefore, experience the joys and sorrows on our journey not as obstacles but as stepping stones to fulfill the plan of God.

Antony Cheliyan csc

[Back to Calendar](#)

Readings: Rev 14:14-19, Luke 21:5-11

The readings of the day speak about the end times. In the first reading, John speaks about the glorious presence of God in his vision. John sees in heaven the heavenly host celebrating the victory over evil. God is praised and worshipped for the victory. The message from the first reading is that there will be persecution before victory. There will always be a fight between good and evil. The struggle is that we need to battle for what is good and upright. The reading gives us the hope that God stands with us in our struggle to fight for what is right.

In the Gospel reading, Jesus predicts the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple. This prophecy created anxiety and fear among the Jews. The foretelling of the destruction was a dreadful judgment because the temple was central to the Jews. The Jews asked Jesus for a sign that would indicate the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple. Instead of giving any sign, Jesus admonishes them not to ask for signs but rather to seek God's kingdom. Through the Gospel reading, we are invited not to be alarmed and worried about judgments of false prophets but rather to be vigilant and to believe in Jesus who is the beginning and the end.

Anthoni Reddy csc

[Back to Calendar](#)

Readings: Rev 15: 1-4; Lk 21: 12-19

Today Jesus warns us about choosing life carefully and he gives us terms and conditions of following him. In the Gospel Jesus tells us that there are persecutions when we follow him. Following Jesus is not walking on red carpet, where people will clap hands and welcome. Instead Jesus reminds us that following him will also cost us our life.

In this present world, we still see violence based on religion as we see in Orissa, Karnataka, and other states as well. But the level of fights and persecution has come down.

Most often we tend to think of persecution in literal form where some people come up with sticks to beat up others. A priest may say that his parish people are very good and they don't do such things. Following Jesus is also following his values and standing for it. When there are certain issues in the parish or in everyday life and when the priest takes a stand, some may say "you don't preach to us now." This is what Jesus is warning us; saying following him is to stand for the values he holds.

Today's readings challenge me to stand on the side of Jesus by following him and his values rather than run away or hide from people who challenge us or reject us.

Joel G Mendonca csc

[Back to Calendar](#)

Readings: Rev 18:1-2, 21-23, 19:1-3, 9, Lk 21: 20-28

Today's liturgy of the word invites us to prepare for the second coming of the Son of God. Both the readings initially put into everyone's heart the fear of destruction and calls to be wo/men who are ready to welcome the Lord. In the first reading, the angel having great authority shouts out the fall of Babylon and a haunt of foul spirit and demons. It is similar to Jesus' foretelling of the destruction of Jerusalem temple in the Gospel.

The heavenly Father loved His people immensely. Yet, they went astray from him. Thus, he had sent many prophets, priests and kings to lead them in the path that he had prepared. At last, he sent his only son to redeem them; for the redemption of full humanity was the only desire and plan of God. As the Son of God, Jesus preached to the people but they failed to recognize the love of the Father. So, by foretelling the destruction of the Jerusalem temple, Jesus puts into the hearts of all, the turmoil at the end time and hints the unexpected arrival of the Son of Man "coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

Vimal csc

Readings: Rev 20: 1-4, 11-21; Lk 21:29-33

In the first reading, St. John in the Book of Revelation speaks about *heaven* and *hell*, *angels* and *Satan*, *serpents* and *fallen angels* and the judge one who sat on the throne, and around the throne people waiting for judgment. He also speaks about the fall of Jerusalem and the coming of New Jerusalem indicating the reign of God on earth.

In the Gospel reading, we see Jesus talking about **Hope**: *“When the buds burst open, you see for yourselves and know that summer is now near.”* In the same way, when we experience the Lord’s presence in our lives, we know that the Kingdom of God is near. God loves us and he loves to be with us. It is our faith that when God is with us, there is nothing to be feared. And his blessings and guidance will always be with us. Therefore, we need to recognize his presence in everything and start moving towards him. Jesus says: *Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.* Jesus will never fail us when we have full trust in him. Jesus is the everlasting Light; no darkness will ever overcome this Light. Jesus in his abundant love continues to show his light to guide us in the right path. To have his guidance in our life what we need to do is to *“love the Lord with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our mind and with all our strength.”* - Mk 12: 30.

Jesus’ prophecy is fulfilled by the destruction of Jerusalem. Like Jerusalem the earthly city, our world also will one day disappear, but the words of Jesus will live among us forever. If we trust in his words and scripture, we will be saved from all the destruction and the evil forces because of the Lord’s promise to each one of us.

P. Bharath csc

[Back to Calendar](#)

Readings: Rev 22:1-7; Lk 21:34-36

Prayerfulness and watchfulness are two important characteristics to reach the Kingdom of God. Jesus is inviting us to prepare for the Kingdom of God rather than spending our days doing worthless things. No one knows the exact time of second coming of Jesus Christ. Therefore, every moment that we spend on this earth should make us holier and more prayerful.

I remember having a conversation with one of my formators many years ago. During our conversation, he asked me; 'when will you be a priest?' I responded, 'after 14 years'. Then, after a few moments, he corrected me saying; 'No, the moment you joined Holy Cross you became a priest.' He did not mean that I was already a priest; however, he meant that I did not need to wait fourteen years to start living a holy life. I did not need to wait until I was a priest to start praying each day and striving to become a better disciple of Christ.

In a similar way, today's readings remind us how to prepare for the Kingdom of God. The readings for today urge us not to wait until the last day. No one knows when the Son of Man will arrive; therefore, we must be watchful. As disciples of Jesus, we do not wait for a future time to live out the gospel because the time is now.

Pretham Joy Menezes csc

[Back to Calendar](#)

Readings: Is 2:1-5; Rom 13:11-14; Mat 24:37-44

Today the mother Church enters the first week of Advent. In this season, the Church invites the faithful to prepare themselves internally to welcome and celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. In the first reading, we hear prophet Isaiah inviting people to look for the house of God where each one can experience Goodness, Justice and Hope. In the second reading, St. Paul urges people to mend their ways and adopt the righteous path which leads all to salvation. The Gospel reading invites us to be ready to welcome the 'other'; in other words, to be inclusive in order to see Jesus in the face of the other. Many a time, we feel blessed to have good things happen to us but are we ready to face the adversity and ask God for enough grace to bear them than to run from them? Only in the dark we understand the worth of light and in the face of suffering, we look for joy. This season of Advent is a reminder for us to be alert and awake in order to experience Joy, Hope and Love of Christ in letting go selfishness, laziness, despair, sadness and hatred.

Jayaraj I. csc

Readings: Is 4:2-6; Mt 8:5-11

“Humility is the most important virtue in life, for without it we cannot truly love. Faith is essential in life, for without it we cannot live as a whole person.”

Today’s liturgy calls us to be humble in character, loving in nature and have total faith in our Creator. “Humility is the mother of all virtues... it is by being humble, love becomes real”, says St. Mother Teresa. Jesus is astonished at the same three great qualities of centurion who visited him on the account of his servant’s fever. Let’s explore further these three qualities:

Loving: Those days, slaves were treated as objects. And yet, the centurion did not reject the slave. Love transforms the whole paradigm of person’s thinking. Thus St. Paul says ‘love bears all things believes all things, hopes all things, endure all things’ and love is greater than any other thing.

Humility: Being a centurion he lowers himself to the status of a subject, keeps away his status and requests Jesus. Each word of this sentence has deeper meaning.

Total faith: He probably did not come directly to Jesus. As a normal person, he might have consulted many physicians in his place; but did not lose faith or hope in the Creator. Jesus appreciates not the faith he had in him but the hope he had in God no matter which religion he belonged.

So, let us strive to have these qualities though which we can spread kingdom of God around us.

Arone Vas csc

[Back to Calendar](#)

Readings: Is 11:1-10, Lk 10:21-24

Today's readings invite us to recognize and experience the presence of the Holy Spirit in our daily lives. The Gospel reading tells us that to experience the spirit we need to imbibe the qualities of a child. God has disclosed himself in Jesus Christ and entrusted him with a mission of bringing salvation to the whole humanity. Throughout his life, Jesus was led by the spirit in fulfilling the mission of the Father. The same Spirit accompanied the disciples in their mission of preaching the good news, healing the sick and casting out the demons. The question for us is to look at ourselves whether we are experiencing the presence of the Spirit in our everyday life or not. The readings also speak about the intimate union between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This was prophesied by the Prophet Isaiah in the first reading. Therefore, we are invited to experience God in and through his Spirit like the disciples who always experienced and were empowered by the spirit to do the will of God and to establish his kingdom on this earth. Let us allow the Holy Spirit to work in us.

Peter James csc

[Back to Calendar](#)

Readings: Rom 10:9-18; Mt 4: 18 -22

Everyone receives the call of God in his / her own circumstances just as the Apostles. However, do we heed his call? Do we have the courage to follow Jesus in our day-today-lives? Jesus knew the importance of the communitarian life. Thus, he called simple fishermen to accompany him in completing the mission for which he was sent by the Father. How many of us let others come into our lives and in our mission or work? Today's Gospel reading challenges the defining character of our postmodern era – individualism. Today Jesus invites us to be ever ready to leave our baggage such as name, fame, post and prestige to serve people. He also reminds us the fact that we all need one another and walking together indeed helps us to attain our goals faster than walking alone.

Robin csc