

Abide in My Word[®]

2011 Mass Readings at Your Fingertips

the **WORD**
among us[®]
press

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The Sermon on the Mount.
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Introduction

“When he saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him. He began to teach them. . . .”

—*Matthew 5:1-2*

Dear Friends in Christ,

The image on the cover of this year’s *Abide in My Word*®, from a painting by the seventeenth-century French artist Jean-Baptiste de Champaigne, depicts Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount. Champaigne portrays Jesus’ followers eagerly gathered around him, listening attentively and hungering for his words of truth and wisdom.

Unlike those first disciples, we don’t know what Jesus actually sounded like—whether his voice was deep and resonant or had a mellow timbre. Yet surely the tones in which he spoke reinforced the meaning of his words. When he comforted the sick and forgave sinners, the warm quality of his voice must have communicated his tenderness, mercy, and compassion. And when he rebuked demons and calmed the storm, he would have issued his commands with authority and sternness.

Although Jesus’ physical voice is no longer audible to us, his words still come to us clearly at Mass and through our reading of the Scriptures, and they resonate strongly in our minds and hearts. Using *Abide in My Word*® to read and meditate on the daily texts can help us prepare to receive the word of God at the Sunday Eucharistic celebration and nourish us in our times of prayer on weekdays, even when our schedules do not permit us to attend daily Mass.

The Scripture texts in *Abide in My Word*® 2011 have been selected by the Church for use at Mass for each day of the entire year. These readings are taken from the official *Lectionary for Mass for Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America*, which is based on the *New American Bible* translation. In this liturgical year, the Sunday gospels are from Matthew (Cycle A), and the weekday readings follow Year I.

The Mass readings recount the events that testify to the Lord’s presence among his people. These events—Jesus’ incarnation, his public ministry, and his passion, death, and resurrection—continually remind us of his tremendous love and care for us and are reflected in the seasons of the Church year: Advent, Lent, Easter, and Ordinary Time.

On Sundays and feast days, the first Mass reading offers us selections from the Old Testament—from the historical and wisdom books as well as from the prophets—that reflect important themes from the gospel reading for that day. The responsorial psalm or canticle complements and expands on the first reading and provides a way

for us to voice our prayerful response to God. The second reading generally presents selections from the Acts of the Apostles, from the letters written by Paul and others to the early Christians, or from the Book of Revelation, depending on the season. The third reading is from the gospels, since Christ himself is the center of all of Scripture and the entire liturgy. On weekdays, usually only one reading—from either the Old or New Testament—precedes the responsorial psalm and the gospel.

This arrangement of the Mass readings brings out the unity of the Scriptures. As the General Introduction to the *Lectionary for Mass* points out, “The New Testament lies hidden in the Old; the Old Testament comes fully to light in the New” (5). Throughout the liturgical year, “but above all during the seasons of Easter, Lent, and Advent, the choice and sequence of readings are aimed at giving the faithful an ever-deepening perception of the faith they profess and of the history of salvation” (60).

When Jesus finished speaking to those listening to his Sermon on the Mount, the evangelist Matthew tells us “that the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority” (8:28). As we listen to and meditate on the daily readings, may we too be filled with awe as Jesus opens our minds and hearts to understand his words of life and truth!

The Word Among Us Press

JANUARY

Saturday, January 1

**The Octave Day of Christmas
The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God**

First Reading

NUMBERS 6:22-27

The LORD said to Moses: "Speak to Aaron and his sons and tell them: This is how you shall bless the Israelites. Say to them:

The LORD bless you and keep you!

The LORD let his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you!

The LORD look upon you kindly and give you peace!

So shall they invoke my name upon the Israelites, and I will bless them."

Responsorial Psalm

PSALM 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8

R. May God bless us in his mercy.

May God have pity on us and bless us;
may he let his face shine upon us.

So may your way be known upon earth;
among all nations, your salvation. **R.**

May the nations be glad and exult
because you rule the peoples in equity;
the nations on the earth you guide. **R.**

May the peoples praise you, O God;
may all the peoples praise you!

May God bless us,
and may all the ends of the earth fear him! **R.**

Second Reading

GALATIANS 4:4-7

Brothers and sisters: When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to ransom those under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. As proof that you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then also an heir, through God.

Gospel

LUKE 2:16-21

The shepherds went in haste to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known the message that had been told them about this child. All who heard it were amazed by what had been told them by the shepherds. And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told to them.

When eight days were completed for his circumcision, he was named Jesus, the name given him by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Sunday, January 2

The Epiphany of the Lord

First Reading

ISAIAH 60:1-6

Rise up in splendor, Jerusalem! Your light has come,
the glory of the Lord shines upon you.
See, darkness covers the earth,
and thick clouds cover the peoples;
but upon you the LORD shines,
and over you appears his glory.
Nations shall walk by your light,
and kings by your shining radiance.
Raise your eyes and look about;
they all gather and come to you:
your sons come from afar,
and your daughters in the arms of their nurses.

Then you shall be radiant at what you see,
your heart shall throb and overflow,
for the riches of the sea shall be emptied out before you,
the wealth of nations shall be brought to you.
Caravans of camels shall fill you,
dromedaries from Midian and Ephah;
all from Sheba shall come
bearing gold and frankincense,
and proclaiming the praises of the LORD.

Responsorial Psalm

PSALM 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13

R. Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.

O God, with your judgment endow the king,
and with your justice, the king's son;
He shall govern your people with justice
and your afflicted ones with judgment. **R.**
Justice shall flower in his days,
and profound peace, till the moon be no more.

May he rule from sea to sea,
and from the River to the ends of the earth. **R.**

The kings of Tarshish and the Isles shall offer gifts;
the kings of Arabia and Seba shall bring tribute.

All kings shall pay him homage,
all nations shall serve him. **R.**

For he shall rescue the poor when he cries out,
and the afflicted when he has no one to help him.

He shall have pity for the lowly and the poor;
the lives of the poor he shall save. **R.**

Second Reading

EPHESIANS 3:2-3a, 5-6

Brothers and sisters: You have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for your benefit, namely, that the mystery was made known to me by revelation. It was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Gospel

MATTHEW 2:1-12

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it has been written through the prophet:

*And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
since from you shall come a ruler,
who is to shepherd my people Israel."*

Then Herod called the magi secretly and ascertained from them the time of the star's appearance. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search diligently for the child. When you have found him, bring me word, that I too may go and do him homage." After their audience with the king they set out. And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was. They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way.

Monday, January 3

First Reading

1 JOHN 3:22–4:6

Beloved: We receive from him whatever we ask, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. And his commandment is this: we should believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another just as he commanded us. Those who keep his commandments remain in him, and he in them, and the way we know that he remains in us is from the Spirit whom he gave us.

Beloved, do not trust every spirit but test the spirits to see whether they belong to God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. This is how you can know the Spirit of God: every spirit that acknowledges Jesus Christ come in the flesh belongs to God, and every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus does not belong to God. This is the spirit of the antichrist who, as you heard, is to come, but in fact is already in the world. You belong to God, children, and you have conquered them, for the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. They belong to the world; accordingly, their teaching belongs to the world, and the world listens to them. We belong to God, and anyone who knows God listens to us, while anyone who does not belong to God refuses to hear us. This is how we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of deceit.

Responsorial Psalm

PSALM 2:7bc-8, 10-12a

R. I will give you all the nations for an inheritance.

The LORD said to me, "You are my Son;

 this day I have begotten you.

Ask of me and I will give you

the nations for an inheritance
and the ends of the earth for your possession.” **R.**
And now, O kings, give heed;
take warning, you rulers of the earth.
Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice before him;
with trembling rejoice. **R.**

Gospel

MATTHEW 4:12-17, 23-25

When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what had been said through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled:

*Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,
the way to the sea, beyond the Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles,
the people who sit in darkness
have seen a great light,
on those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death
light has arisen.*

From that time on, Jesus began to preach and say, “Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

He went around all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom, and curing every disease and illness among the people. His fame spread to all of Syria, and they brought to him all who were sick with various diseases and racked with pain, those who were possessed, lunatics, and paralytics, and he cured them. And great crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan followed him.

Tuesday, January 4

First Reading

1 JOHN 4:7-10

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love. In this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent his only-begotten Son into the world so that we might have life through him. In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins.

Responsorial Psalm

PSALM 72:1-2, 3-4, 7-8

R. Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.

O God, with your judgment endow the king,

and with your justice, the king's son;

He shall govern your people with justice

and your afflicted ones with judgment. **R.**

The mountains shall yield peace for the people,

and the hills justice.

He shall defend the afflicted among the people,

save the children of the poor. **R.**

Justice shall flower in his days,

and profound peace, till the moon be no more.

May he rule from sea to sea,

and from the River to the ends of the earth. **R.**

Gospel

MARK 6:34-44

When Jesus saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things. By now it was already late and his disciples approached him and said, "This is a deserted place and it is already very late. Dismiss them so that they can go to the surrounding farms and villages and buy themselves something to eat." He said to them in reply, "Give them some food yourselves." But they said to him, "Are we to buy two hundred days' wages worth of food and give it to them to eat?" He asked them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." And when they had found out they said, "Five loaves and two fish." So he gave orders to have them sit down in groups on the green grass. The people took their places in rows by hundreds and by fifties. Then, taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing, broke the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; he also divided the two fish among them all. They all ate and were satisfied. And they picked up twelve wicker baskets full of fragments and what was left of the fish. Those who ate of the loaves were five thousand men.

Wednesday, January 5

First Reading

1 JOHN 4:11-18

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also must love one another. No one has ever seen God. Yet, if we love one another, God remains in us, and his love is brought to perfection in us.

This is how we know that we remain in him and he in us, that he has given us of his Spirit. Moreover, we have seen and testify that the Father sent his Son as savior of the world. Whoever acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him and he in God. We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us.

God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him. In this is love brought to perfection among us, that we have confidence on the day of judgment because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment, and so one who fears is not yet perfect in love.

Responsorial Psalm

PSALM 72:1-2, 10, 12-13

R. Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.

O God, with your judgment endow the king,
and with your justice, the king's son;

He shall govern your people with justice
and your afflicted ones with judgment. **R.**

The kings of Tarshish and the Isles shall offer gifts;
the kings of Arabia and Seba shall bring tribute. **R.**

For he shall rescue the poor when he cries out,
and the afflicted when he has no one to help him.

He shall have pity for the lowly and the poor;
the lives of the poor he shall save. **R.**

Gospel

MARK 6:45-52

After the five thousand had eaten and were satisfied, Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and precede him to the other side toward Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. And when he had taken leave of them, he went off to the mountain to pray. When it was evening, the boat was far out on the sea and he was alone on shore. Then he saw that they were tossed about while rowing, for the wind was against them. About the fourth watch of the night, he came toward them walking on the sea. He meant to pass by them. But when they saw him walking on the sea, they thought it was a ghost and cried out. They had all seen him and were terrified. But at once he spoke with them, "Take courage, it is I, do not be afraid!" He got into the boat with them and the wind died down. They were completely astounded. They had not understood the incident of the loaves. On the contrary, their hearts were hardened.

Thursday, January 6

First Reading

1 JOHN 4:19–5:4

Beloved, we love God because he first loved us. If anyone says, “I love God,” but hates his brother, he is a liar; for whoever does not love a brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. This is the commandment we have from him: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is begotten by God, and everyone who loves the Father loves also the one begotten by him. In this way we know that we love the children of God when we love God and obey his commandments. For the love of God is this, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, for whoever is begotten by God conquers the world. And the victory that conquers the world is our faith.

Responsorial Psalm

PSALM 72:1-2, 14 and 15bc, 17

R. Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.

O God, with your judgment endow the king,

and with your justice, the king's son;

He shall govern your people with justice

and your afflicted ones with judgment. **R.**

From fraud and violence he shall redeem them,

and precious shall their blood be in his sight.

May they be prayed for continually;

day by day shall they bless him. **R.**

May his name be blessed forever;

as long as the sun his name shall remain.

In him shall all the tribes of the earth be blessed;

all the nations shall proclaim his happiness. **R.**

Gospel

LUKE 4:14-22a

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news of him spread throughout the whole region. He taught in their synagogues and was praised by all.

He came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and went according to his custom into the synagogue on the sabbath day. He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written:

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring glad tidings to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.*

Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. He said to them, "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing." And all spoke highly of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth.

Friday, January 7

First Reading

1 JOHN 5:5-13

Beloved: Who indeed is the victor over the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

This is the one who came through water and Blood, Jesus Christ, not by water alone, but by water and Blood. The Spirit is the one who testifies, and the Spirit is truth. So there are three who testify, the Spirit, the water, and the Blood, and the three are of one accord. If we accept human testimony, the testimony of God is surely greater. Now the testimony of God is this, that he has testified on behalf of his Son. Whoever believes in the Son of God has this testimony within himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar by not believing the testimony God has given about his Son. And this is the testimony: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever possesses the Son has life; whoever does not possess the Son of God does not have life.

I write these things to you so that you may know that you have eternal life, you who believe in the name of the Son of God.

Responsorial Psalm

PSALM 147:12-13, 14-15, 19-20

R. Praise the Lord, Jerusalem. (or R. Alleluia.)

Glorify the LORD, O Jerusalem;

praise your God, O Zion.

For he has strengthened the bars of your gates;

he has blessed your children within you. **R.**

He has granted peace in your borders;

with the best of wheat he fills you.

He sends forth his command to the earth;
swiftly runs his word! **R.**
He has proclaimed his word to Jacob,
his statutes and his ordinances to Israel.
He has not done thus for any other nation;
his ordinances he has not made known to them. Alleluia. **R.**

Gospel

LUKE 5:12-16

It happened that there was a man full of leprosy in one of the towns where Jesus was; and when he saw Jesus, he fell prostrate, pleaded with him, and said, "Lord, if you wish, you can make me clean." Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, "I do will it. Be made clean." And the leprosy left him immediately. Then he ordered him not to tell anyone, but "Go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them." The report about him spread all the more, and great crowds assembled to listen to him and to be cured of their ailments, but he would withdraw to deserted places to pray.

Saturday, January 8

First Reading

1 JOHN 5:14-21

Beloved: We have this confidence in him that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in regard to whatever we ask, we know that what we have asked him for is ours. If anyone sees his brother sinning, if the sin is not deadly, he should pray to God and he will give him life. This is only for those whose sin is not deadly. There is such a thing as deadly sin, about which I do not say that you should pray. All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that is not deadly.

We know that anyone begotten by God does not sin; but the one begotten by God he protects, and the Evil One cannot touch him. We know that we belong to God, and the whole world is under the power of the Evil One. We also know that the Son of God has come and has given us discernment to know the one who is true. And we are in the one who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life. Children, be on your guard against idols.

Responsorial Psalm

PSALM 149:1-2, 3-4, 5-6a and 9b

R. The Lord takes delight in his people. (or R. Alleluia.)

Sing to the LORD a new song

of praise in the assembly of the faithful.

Let Israel be glad in their maker,

let the children of Zion rejoice in their king. **R.**

Let them praise his name in the festive dance,

let them sing praise to him with timbrel and harp.

For the LORD loves his people,

and he adorns the lowly with victory. **R.**

Let the faithful exult in glory;

let them sing for joy upon their couches;

Let the high praises of God be in their throats.

This is the glory of all his faithful. Alleluia. **R.**

Gospel

JOHN 3:22-30

Jesus and his disciples went into the region of Judea, where he spent some time with them baptizing. John was also baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was an abundance of water there, and people came to be baptized, for John had not yet been imprisoned. Now a dispute arose between the disciples of John and a Jew about ceremonial washings. So they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, the one who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you testified, here he is baptizing and everyone is coming to him." John answered and said, "No one can receive anything except what has been given from heaven. You yourselves can testify that I said that I am not the Christ, but that I was sent before him. The one who has the bride is the bridegroom; the best man, who stands and listens for him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. So this joy of mine has been made complete. He must increase; I must decrease."

Sunday, January 9

The Baptism of the Lord

First Reading

ISAIAH 42:1-4, 6-7

Thus says the LORD:

Here is my servant whom I uphold,

my chosen one with whom I am pleased,