

20 November 2022: The Sunday Before Advent

First Reading

A reading from the Book Jeremiah (23:1-6)

¹ “What sorrow awaits the leaders of my people—the shepherds of my sheep—for they have destroyed and scattered the very ones they were expected to care for,” says the LORD.

² Therefore, this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says to these shepherds: “Instead of caring for my flock and leading them to safety, you have deserted them and driven them to destruction. Now I will pour out judgment on you for the evil you have done to them. ³ But I will gather together the remnant of my flock from the countries where I have driven them. I will bring them back to their own sheepfold, and they will be fruitful and increase in number. ⁴ Then I will appoint responsible shepherds who will care for them, and they will never be afraid again. Not a single one will be lost or missing. I, the LORD, have spoken!

⁵ “For the time is coming,”
says the LORD,

“when I will raise up a righteous descendant
from King David’s line.

He will be a King who rules with wisdom.

He will do what is just and right throughout the land.

⁶ And this will be his name:

‘The LORD Is Our Righteousness.’

In that day Judah will be saved,
and Israel will live in safety.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

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Second Reading

A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Colossians (1:11-20)

¹¹ We also pray that you will be strengthened with all his glorious power so you will have all the endurance and patience you need. May you be filled with joy, ¹² always thanking the Father. He has enabled you to share in the inheritance that belongs to his people, who live in the light. ¹³ For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, ¹⁴ who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins.

¹⁵ Christ is the visible image of the invisible God.

He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, ¹⁶ for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth.

He made the things we can see
and the things we can't see—

such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world.

Everything was created through him and for him.

¹⁷ He existed before anything else,
and he holds all creation together.

¹⁸ Christ is also the head of the church,
which is his body.

He is the beginning,
supreme over all who rise from the dead.
So he is first in everything.

¹⁹ For God in all his fullness
was pleased to live in Christ,

²⁰ and through him God reconciled
everything to himself.

He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth
by means of Christ's blood on the cross.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**