

FIRST READING: Isaiah 45:1-7

Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus,
 whose right hand I have grasped
 to subdue nations before him
 and strip kings of their robes,
 to open doors before him—
 and the gates shall not be closed:
²I will go before you
 and level the mountains,
 I will break in pieces the doors of bronze
 and cut through the bars of iron,
³I will give you the treasures of darkness
 and riches hidden in secret places,
 so that you may know that it is I, the LORD,
 the God of Israel, who call you by your name.
⁴For the sake of my servant Jacob,
 and Israel my chosen,
 I call you by your name,
 I surname you, though you do not know me.
⁵I am the LORD, and there is no other;
 besides me there is no god.
 I arm you, though you do not know me,
⁶so that they may know, from the rising of the
 sun
 and from the west, that there is no one
 besides me;
 I am the LORD, and there is no other.
⁷I form light and create darkness,
 I make weal and create woe;
 I the LORD do all these things.

Psalm 96:1-9 [10-13]

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,
 To the church of the Thessalonians in God the
 Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:
 Grace to you and peace.

²We always give thanks to God for all of you
 and mention you in our prayers, constantly ³re-
 membering before our God and Father your

work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness
 of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴For we know,
 brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has
 chosen you, ⁵because our message of the gospel
 came to you not in word only, but also in power
 and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction;
 just as you know what kind of persons we proved
 to be among you for your sake. ⁶And you became
 imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of
 persecution you received the word with joy in-
 spired by the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an
 example to all the believers in Macedonia and in
 Achaia. ⁸For the word of the Lord has sounded
 forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia,
 but in every place your faith in God has become
 known, so that we have no need to speak about
 it. ⁹For the people of those regions report about
 us what kind of welcome we had among you, and
 how you turned to God from idols, to serve a liv-
 ing and true God, ¹⁰and to wait for his Son from
 heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus,
 who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

GOSPEL: Matthew 22:15-22

The Pharisees went and plotted to entrap [Jesus]
 in what he said. ¹⁶So they sent their disciples to
 him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher,
 we know that you are sincere, and teach the way
 of God in accordance with truth, and show def-
 erence to no one; for you do not regard people
 with partiality. ¹⁷Tell us, then, what you think. Is it
 lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?” ¹⁸But
 Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why are you
 putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹Show
 me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought
 him a denarius. ²⁰Then he said to them, “Whose
 head is this, and whose title?” ²¹They answered,
 “The emperor’s.” Then he said to them, “Give
 therefore to the emperor the things that are the
 emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”
²²When they heard this, they were amazed; and
 they left him and went away.

Next Sunday’s Readings: Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 46; Romans 3:19-28; John 8:31-36.

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