

## First Reading: Micah 3:5-12

*The LORD announces judgment against prophets who can be bribed to give favorable oracles. Because rulers too can be bribed to practice injustice, Micah announces the coming destruction of Jerusalem. Later, Jeremiah escaped execution because of Micah's daring precedent (Jer. 26:18-19).*

<sup>5</sup>Thus says the LORD concerning the prophets  
who lead my people astray,  
who cry "Peace"  
when they have something to eat,  
but declare war against those  
who put nothing into their mouths.  
<sup>6</sup>Therefore it shall be night to you, without vision,  
and darkness to you, without revelation.  
The sun shall go down upon the prophets,  
and the day shall be black over them;  
<sup>7</sup>the seers shall be disgraced,  
and the diviners put to shame;  
they shall all cover their lips,  
for there is no answer from God.  
<sup>8</sup>But as for me, I am filled with power,  
with the spirit of the LORD,  
and with justice and might,  
to declare to Jacob his transgression  
and to Israel his sin.

<sup>9</sup>Hear this, you rulers of the house of Jacob  
and chiefs of the house of Israel,  
who abhor justice  
and pervert all equity,  
<sup>10</sup>who build Zion with blood  
and Jerusalem with wrong!  
<sup>11</sup>Its rulers give judgment for a bribe,  
its priests teach for a price,  
its prophets give oracles for money;  
yet they lean upon the LORD and say,  
"Surely the LORD is with us!  
No harm shall come upon us."  
<sup>12</sup>Therefore because of you  
Zion shall be plowed as a field;  
Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins,  
and the mountain of the house a wooded height.

### Lectionary questions:

1. What do you learn about God?
2. What do you learn about others?
3. What do you learn about yourself?
4. If you were to teach this to someone else, what would you say?
5. What does this lectionary text stir in you? A statement? A truth? An emotion? A thought?

## Psalm: Psalm 43

Send out your light and truth, that they may lead me. (Ps. 43:3)

<sup>1</sup>Give judgment for me, O God, and defend my cause against an un- | godly people;  
deliver me from the deceitful | and the wicked.

<sup>2</sup>**For you are the God of my strength; why have you re- | jected me,  
and why do I wander in such gloom while the enemy op- | presses me? R**

<sup>3</sup>Send out your light and your truth, that | they may lead me,  
and bring me to your holy hill and to your | sanctuary;

<sup>4</sup>**that I may go to the altar of God, to the God of my | joy and gladness;  
and on the harp I will give thanks to you, O | God my God.**

<sup>5</sup>**Why are you so full of heaviness, O my soul, and why are you so disquiet- | ed within  
me?**

**Put your trust in God, for I will yet give thanks to the one who is my help | and my  
God. R**

## **Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13**

*Paul uses paternal imagery to depict the guidance and encouragement he provided to the Thessalonians. They received from Paul the word of God, which energizes their faith.*

<sup>9</sup>You remember our labor and toil, brothers and sisters; we worked night and day, so that we might not burden any of you while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. <sup>10</sup>You are witnesses, and God also, how pure, upright, and blameless our conduct was toward you believers. <sup>11</sup>As you know, we dealt with each one of you like a father with his children, <sup>12</sup>urging and encouraging you and pleading that you lead a life worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

<sup>13</sup>We also constantly give thanks to God for this, that when you received the word of God that you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word but as what it really is, God's word, which is also at work in you believers.

## **Gospel: Matthew 23:1-12**

*Jesus encourages his disciples to obey the words of Moses they hear from their teachers but to shun the hypocrisy and pretension of those who do not practice what they teach.*

<sup>1</sup>Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, <sup>2</sup>“The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; <sup>3</sup>therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it; but do not do as they do, for they do not practice what they teach. <sup>4</sup>They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them. <sup>5</sup>They do all their deeds to be seen by others; for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long. <sup>6</sup>They love to have the place of honor at banquets and the best seats in the synagogues, <sup>7</sup>and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, and to have people call them rabbi. <sup>8</sup>But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all students. <sup>9</sup>And call no one your father on earth, for you have one Father—the one in heaven. <sup>10</sup>Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Messiah. <sup>11</sup>The greatest among you will be your servant. <sup>12</sup>All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted.”