

**Guide us in being mindful of Your Ways!**

Isaiah 63:16-17, 19b; 64:2-7

Psalm 80:2-3,15-16,18-19

1 Cor. 1:3-9

Mark13:33-37

Isaiah notes the Lord is our Father, our redeemer, the one who is named forever, and calls for him to come down from heaven and perform deeds even more awesome than of old. The Israelites are wandering from God's ways, hardening their hearts, and as a result are withering in their lack of fear, their lack of calling upon the Lord for help and they are delivered up to their guilt. Isaiah recognizes God as the potter who molded the Israelites and so will remold those who seek such help.

The psalmist describes the Lord as Shepherd of Israel and seeks his saving power. "Look down from heaven, O Lord," he asks, and protect this vine that you have planted. The Lord can make the son of man strong again and give new life and the people will no longer withdraw from calling upon your name.

Paul speaks to the Corinthians, his brothers and sisters in Christ, reminding them they are spiritually gifted by God through Christ Jesus, in fact lacking no spiritual gift. They are called by God to fellowship in the Lord Jesus as they await his revelation. The faith of the Corinthians will be kept firm until the end as they are endowed with grace.

Jesus tells his disciples the importance of being watchful and alert. No one knows the time of Jesus' Second Coming and he emphasizes this by a relevant parable. The theme is clear: "be watchful at all times!"

The Father is our Redeemer,  
The Son, our Deliverer,  
The Holy Spirit, our Guide.

Today's readings are preparing us for the Church's celebration of Jesus' first coming to earth with a reminder that there will be a second coming. The point made is the unpredictability of the second coming time since Jesus himself states "no one knows the hour." That being so the only sensible thing to do is to always remain prepared; consider this a message of summons and hope.

People often note that "time seems to fly by," that someone is here today and gone tomorrow. There is truth in the old cliché, "out of sight, out of mind," and perhaps that is why we often fail to think of the life to come. We are called to order in ourselves every action, every deed, as if this is our last day, for if we are not prepared today how will we be prepared tomorrow? Of what use is a long life if we are not using each day to amend ourselves, be it ever in small ways, for the better? In fact, we cannot count on living a long life since the unexpected can happen in a single day. How often we hear of those who seem to be on top of the world one day and in dire straits the next. When we are in good health it is much easier to do good works, but when we are ill it is much more difficult. Time is precious so give each day your best efforts while you can and always be ready so that the Master will not find us unprepared.

