

First Reading

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

His dominion is vast and forever peaceful.

The people who walked in darkness
 have seen a great light;
Upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom
 a light has shone.
You have brought them abundant joy
 and great rejoicing,
As they rejoice before you as at the harvest,
 as people make merry when dividing spoils.
For the yoke that burdened them,
 the pole on their shoulder,
And the rod of their taskmaster
 you have smashed, as on the day of Midian.
For every boot that tramped in battle,
 every cloak rolled in blood,
 will be burned as fuel for flames.
For a child is born to us, a son is given us;
 upon his shoulder dominion rests.
They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero,
 Father-Forever, Prince of Peace.
His dominion is vast
 and forever peaceful,
From David's throne, and over his kingdom,
 which he confirms and sustains
By judgment and justice,
 both now and forever.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this!

The word of the Lord.

Second Reading

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Colossians

Let the peace of Christ control your hearts.

Brothers and sisters:

Put on, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved,
heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and
patience,

bearing with one another and forgiving one another,
if one has a grievance against another;
as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do.

And over all these put on love,
that is, the bond of perfection.

And let the peace of Christ control your hearts,
the peace into which you were also called in one Body.
And be thankful.

The word of the Lord.

Gospel

+ A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

I say this to you: offer no resistance to one who is evil.

Jesus said to his disciples:

“You have heard that it was said,

An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

But I say to you, offer no resistance to one who is evil.

When someone strikes you on your right cheek,
turn the other to him as well.

If anyone wants to go to law with you over your tunic,
hand him your cloak as well.

Should anyone press you into service for one mile,
go with him two miles.

Give to the one who asks of you,
and do not turn your back on one who wants to borrow.

“You have heard that it was said,

You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.

But I say to you, love your enemies

and pray for those who persecute you,
that you may be children of your heavenly Father,
for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good,
and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust.

For if you love those who love you, what recompense will you
have?

Do not the tax collectors do the same?

And if you greet your brothers only,
what is unusual about that?

Do not the pagans do the same?

So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

The Gospel of the Lord.