



THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE

Daily Devotion at Zion + January 2024 AD + Presence

Presence

Beginning to end, devotion is about presence.

Noah, Abraham, Jacob and others who “built altars to the Lord” did so to mark places where God had either appeared to them or spoken to them. In the speaking and appearing, He was near them. The psalms also echo and reverberate with the conviction that God is near—“Where can I flee from your presence?” (Psalm 139:17)—and the prophet Isaiah preached, “Call on God while He is near” (Isaiah 55:6). Where God comes, devotion of one kind or another follows.

When God comes to us in Jesus Christ, we realize He’s come as near to us as our own skin. The Baby on holy Mary’s arms is the same One who appeared to Moses in the burning bush, or to Elijah in the still, small voice, or to Isaiah in the temple. He comes to you, too, shrouded in preaching and the suffering of His Church, even as He once came to us shrouded in the flesh.

It’s not enough to say “God is everywhere.” The question is, where is He *for you*? As the realtors all know, choosing a home is about “location, location, location.” Location is the question for being at home with God, too. Where does He speak to you, hear you, nourish you, and bless you? He does so in His Son, who comes to you in Word and Sacrament.

Christian devotion serves as a set of signposts and maps for knowing and staying in that most blessed of all locations.

About the Cover Art

This sanctuary lamp has rested on Zion’s altar for about 50 years. The Church associates flames with the Holy Spirit and the lamp’s rosy-red hue with blood. Together, they remind us that God’s spiritual presence is also fleshly, as He has come to reside with us in the human flesh and blood of His Son, assumed in the womb of Mary and now given to the Church at the altar. The lamp’s flickering light reminds us: “I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20).

Daily Readings for the Week of Christmas 1 (December 31)

S 1 Samuel 1:1-2, 7b-28
Colossians 1:9-20
Luke 2:22-40

M Isaiah 62:1-5, 10-12
Revelation 19:11-16
Matthew 1:18-25

T 1 Kings 19:1-8
Ephesians 4:1-16
John 6:1-14

W 1 Kings 19:9-18
Ephesians 4:17-32
John 6:15-27

Th Joshua 3:14—4:7
Ephesians 5:1-20
John 9:1-12, 35-38

F Jonah 2:2-9
Ephesians 6:10-20
John 11:17-27, 38-44

Sa Isaiah 49:1-7
Revelation 21:22-27
Matthew 12:14-21

These readings correspond to pages 164—207 in Volume III of For All the Saints.

Daily Readings for the Week of The Baptism of our Lord (January 7)

S Genesis 1:1—2:3
Ephesians 1:3-14
John 1:29-34

M Genesis 2:4-25
Hebrews 1:1-14
John 1:1-18

T Genesis 3:1-24
Hebrews 2:1-10
John 1:19-28

W Genesis 4:1-16
Hebrews 2:11-18
John 1:29-42

Th Genesis 4:17-26
Hebrews 3:1-11
John 1:42-51

F Genesis 6:1-8
Hebrews 3:12-19
John 2:1-12

Sa Genesis 6:9-22
Hebrews 4:1-13
John 2:13-22

These readings correspond to pages 233—268 in Volume III of For All the Saints.

Daily Readings for the Week of Epiphany 2 (January 14)

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| S Genesis 7:1-10, 17-23
Ephesians 4:1-16
Mark 3:7-19 | Th Genesis 11:1-9
Hebrews 6:13-20
John 4:1-15 |
| M Genesis 8:6-22
Hebrews 4:14—5:6
John 2:23—3:15 | F Genesis 11:27—12:8
Hebrews 7:1-17
John 4:16-26 |
| T Genesis 9:1-17
Hebrews 5:7-14
John 3:16-21 | Sa Genesis 12:9—13:1
Hebrews 7:18-28
John 4:27-42 |
| W Genesis 9:18-29
Hebrews 6:1-12
John 3:22-36 | <i>These readings correspond to pages 269—298 in Volume III of <u>For All the Saints</u>.</i> |

Daily Readings for the Week of The Transfiguration of Our Lord (January 21)

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| S (<i>Vol. III pp. 507-510</i>)
Malachi 4:1-6
2 Corinthians 3:7-18
Luke 9:18-27 | Th Genesis 16:15—17:14
Hebrews 10:1-10
John 5:30-47 |
| M Genesis 14:1-24
Hebrews 8:1-13
John 4:43-54 | F Genesis 17:15-27
Hebrews 10:11-25
John 6:1-15 |
| T Genesis 15:1-11, 17-21
Hebrews 9:1-14
John 5:1-18 | Sa Genesis 18:1-16
Hebrews 10:26-39
John 6:16-27 |
| W Genesis 16:1-14
Hebrews 9:15-28
John 5:19-29 | <i>These readings (after Sunday) correspond to pages 302—333 in Volume III of <u>For All the Saints</u>.</i> |