

## **A READING FROM THE PROPHET ISAIAH (The Good News of Deliverance)**

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of our God, to comfort all who mourn, to provide for those who mourn, to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.

They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks; foreigners shall till your land and dress your vines, but you shall be called priests of the Lord; you shall enjoy the wealth of nations, and in their riches you shall glory.

Because their shame was double and dishonor was proclaimed as their lot, therefore in their land they shall possess a double portion; everlasting joy shall be theirs. For I, the Lord, love justice...I will faithfully give them their recompense, and will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed.

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my whole being shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.