

Reading for Weekday in the Second Week of Lent

March 4th 2026

First reading

Jeremiah 18:18-20

‘Come, let us strike him.’

They said, ‘Come, let us make plots against Jeremiah, for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, let us strike him with the tongue, and let us not pay attention to any of his words.’

Hear me, O Lord, and listen to the voice of my adversaries. Should good be repaid with evil? Yet they have dug a pit for my life. Remember how I stood before you to speak good for them, to turn away your wrath from them.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 31(30):5-6. 14. 15-16. R17b

Save me, Lord, in your merciful love.

Release me from the snare they have hidden,
for you indeed are my refuge.

Into your hands I commend my spirit.

You will redeem me, O Lord, O faithful God.

I have heard the slander of the crowd;
terror all around me,

as they plot together against me,
as they plan to take my life.

But as for me, I trust in you, O Lord;

I say, ‘You are my God.

There in your hands is my lot,
from the hands of my enemies deliver me,
and from those who pursue me.’

Gospel Acclamation

John 8:12

Glory to you, O Christ, Wisdom of God the Father.

I am the light of the world, says the Lord;

whoever follows me will have the light of life.

Glory to you, O Christ, Wisdom of God the Father.

Gospel

Matthew 20:17-28

‘They will condemn him to death.’

At that time: As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way he said to them, ‘See, we are going up to Jerusalem. And the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day.’

Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came up to him with her sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something. And he said to her, ‘What do you want?’ She said to him, ‘Say that these two sons of mine are to sit one at your right hand and one at your left in your kingdom.’ Jesus answered, ‘You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?’ They said to him, ‘We

are able.’ He said to them, ‘You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.’ And when the Ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers. But Jesus called them to him and said, ‘You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.’

Short reflection on the reading for today

Jesus asks James and John, “Can you drink the cup that I am going to drink?” Were they were prepared to share his cup, to throw in their lot with him, to follow where he leads, even though it may mean the cross. In the garden of Gethsemane Jesus prayed, “Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me.” Yet, he went on to drink that cup to the full on the cross. At the last supper, he drank of the cup, and then gave the cup to his disciples, who also drank from it. Yet, a little later, they deserted him and fled. In spite of what they promised, James and John would not follow when the going got hard. We too are invited to drink from the Lord’s cup, the cup of the Eucharist. In doing so, we are expressing our willingness to go where he leads and walk in his way. Jesus teaches that way of self-giving service of others, as against lording it over them. We pray that in taking the Lord’s cup today, we would be faithful to what that action signifies—walking in the footsteps of the Son of Man *who came not to be served but to serve*.