

## **FIRST READING:**

*After the collect of the day, wait for the congregation to be seated, approach the altar, make a profound bow before entering the sanctuary as a recognition of the centrality of the altar (no genuflection or sign of the cross is necessary), and go to the ambo (left side of the sanctuary).*

A reading from the Book of Isaiah:

Comfort, give comfort to my people,  
says your God.

Speak to the heart of Jerusalem, and proclaim to her  
that her service has ended,  
that her guilt is expiated,  
That she has received from the hand of the LORD  
double for all her sins.

A voice proclaims:

In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD!  
Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God!<sup>a</sup>

Every valley shall be lifted up,  
every mountain and hill made low;  
The rugged land shall be a plain,  
the rough country, a broad valley.

Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,  
and all flesh shall see it together;  
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

A voice says, "Proclaim!"

I answer, "What shall I proclaim?"

"All flesh is grass,  
and all their loyalty like the flower of the field.

The grass withers, the flower wilts,  
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it.”  
“Yes, the people is grass!

The grass withers, the flower wilts,  
but the word of our God stands forever.”

Go up onto a high mountain,  
Zion, herald of good news!  
Cry out at the top of your voice,  
Jerusalem, herald of good news!  
Cry out, do not fear!  
Say to the cities of Judah:  
Here is your God!

Here comes with power  
the Lord GOD,  
who rules by his strong arm;  
Here is his reward with him,  
his recompense before him.

Like a shepherd he feeds his flock;  
in his arms he gathers the lambs,  
Carrying them in his bosom,  
leading the ewes with care.

(pause)

The word of the Lord.

(Congregation: Thanks be to God.)

*Leave the ambo, make a profound bow to the altar, and resume your place in the congregation so that the cantor can lead the responsorial psalm for the day.*

Isaiah 40:1-11