**FIRST READING Isaiah 35:4-7a**

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

Tell everyone who is discouraged, “Be strong and don't be afraid! God is coming to your rescue, coming to punish your enemies.” The blind will be able to see, and the deaf will hear. The lame will leap and dance, and those who cannot speak will shout for joy. Streams of water will flow through the desert; the burning sand will become a lake, and dry land will be filled with springs.

**PSALM 146**

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, my soul! I will praise him as long as I live; I will sing to my God all my life. Don't put your trust in human leaders; no human being can save you. When they die, they return to the dust; on that day all their plans come to an end. Happy are those who have the God of Jacob to help them and who depend on the Lord their God, the Creator of heaven, earth, and sea, and all that is in them. He always keeps his promises; he judges in favour of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets prisoners free and gives sight to the blind. He lifts those who have fallen; he loves his righteous people. He protects the strangers who live in our land; he helps widows and orphans, but takes the wicked to their ruin. The Lord is king forever. Your God, O Zion, will reign for all time. Praise the Lord!

**SECOND READING James 2: 1-10, 14-17**

A reading from the book of James

My friends, as believers in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, you must never treat people in different ways according to their outward appearance. Suppose a rich man wearing a gold ring and fine clothes comes to your meeting, and a poor man in ragged clothes also comes. If you show more respect to the well-dressed man and say to him, “Have this best seat here,” but say to the poor man, “Stand over there, or sit here on the floor by my feet,” then you are guilty of creating distinctions among yourselves and of making judgments based on evil motives. Listen, my dear friends! God chose the poor people of this world to be rich in faith and to possess the kingdom which he promised to those who love him. But you dishonour the poor! Who are the ones who oppress you and drag you before the judges? The rich! They are the ones who speak evil of that good name which has been given to you. You will be doing the right thing if you obey the law of the Kingdom, which is found in the scripture, “Love your neighbour as you love yourself. ”But if you treat people according to their outward appearance, you are guilty of sin, and the Law condemns you as a lawbreaker. Whoever breaks one commandment is guilty of breaking them all. My friends, what good is it for one of you to say that you have faith if your actions do not prove it? Can that faith save you? Suppose there are brothers or sisters who need clothes and don't have enough to eat. What good is there in your saying to them, “God bless you! Keep warm and eat well!”—if you don't give them the necessities of life? So it is with faith: if it is alone and includes no actions, then it is dead.

**GOSPEL Mark 7:24-37**

**Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.**

**Glory to you O Lord.**

Then Jesus left and went away to the territory near the city of Tyre. He went into a house and did not want anyone to know he was there, but he could not stay hidden. A woman, whose daughter had an evil spirit in her, heard about Jesus and came to him at once and fell at his feet. The woman was a Gentile, born in the region of Phoenicia in Syria. She begged Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter. But Jesus answered, “Let us first feed the children. It isn't right to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.” “Sir,” she answered, “even the dogs under the table eat the children's leftovers!” So Jesus said to her, “Because of that answer, go back home, where you will find that the demon has gone out of your daughter!” She went home and found her child lying on the bed; the demon had indeed gone out of her. Jesus Heals a Deaf-Mute Jesus then left the neighborhood of Tyre and went on through Sidon to Lake Galilee, going by way of the territory of the Ten Towns. Some people brought him a man who was deaf and could hardly speak, and they begged Jesus to place his hands on him. So Jesus took him off alone, away from the crowd, put his fingers in the man's ears, spat, and touched the man's tongue. Then Jesus looked up to heaven, gave a deep groan, and said to the man, “Ephphatha,” which means, “Open up!” At once the man was able to hear, his speech impediment was removed, and he began to talk without any trouble. Then Jesus ordered the people not to speak of it to anyone; but the more he ordered them not to, the more they told it. And all who heard were completely amazed. “How well he does everything!” they exclaimed. “He even causes the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak!”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**