

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Pause - and look up at the assembly

Rejoice with Jerusalem,  
and be glad for her,  
all you who love her;  
rejoice with her in joy,  
all you who mourn over her —  
that you may nurse and be satisfied  
from her consoling breast;  
that you may drink deeply with delight  
from her glorious bosom.  
For thus says the Lord:  
“I will extend prosperity to her like a river,  
and the wealth of the nations like an overflowing stream;  
and you shall nurse and be carried on her arm,  
and dandled on her knees.  
As a mother comforts her child,  
so I will comfort you;  
you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.  
You shall see, and your heart shall rejoice;  
your bodies shall flourish like the grass;  
and it shall be known  
that the hand of the Lord is with his servants.”

PAUSE for **THREE** seconds  
then look up at the people  
and say SLOWLY:



The WORD of the LORD.

*Thanks be to God.*

## SECOND READING – C 14

A reading from the letter of Saint Paul to the Galatians.

Pause - and look up at the assembly

Brothers and sisters:

May I never boast of anything  
except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
by which the world has been crucified to me,  
and I to the world.

For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything;  
but a new creation is everything!

As for those who will follow this rule —  
peace be upon them, and mercy,  
and upon the Israel of God.

From now on, let no one make trouble for me;  
for I carry the marks of Jesus branded on my body.  
May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ  
be with your spirit, brothers and sisters. Amen.



Pause for **THREE** seconds  
then look up at the people  
and say SLOWLY:

The WORD of the LORD.

*Thanks be to God.*

## GOSPEL READING – C 14

The Lord be with you.

*And with your spirit.*

A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke.

*Glory to you, O Lord.*

The Lord appointed seventy others  
and sent them on ahead of him in pairs  
to every town and place where he himself intended to go.  
He said to them,  
“The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few;  
therefore ask the Lord of the harvest  
to send out labourers into his harvest.  
Go on your way.  
See, I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves.  
Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals;  
and greet no one on the road.  
Whatever house you enter,  
first say, ‘Peace to this house!’  
And if someone of peace is there,  
your peace will rest on that person;  
but if not, it will return to you.  
Remain in the same house,  
eating and drinking whatever they provide,  
for the labourer deserves his wage.  
Do not move about from house to house.  
Whenever you enter a town and its people welcome you,  
eat what is set before you;  
cure the sick who are there, and say to them,  
“The kingdom of God has come near to you.”



The GOSPEL of the LORD.

*Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*

## SCRIPTURES IN DEPTH

### Reading I: Isaiah 66:10-14c

Originally this prophecy from Third Isaiah spoke of the joy following the restoration of God's people from exile. The returning exiles are received back by the holy city as a mother who consoles them at her breasts and dandies them on her lap.

The metaphor is mixed, for it also speaks of YHWH sending his "prosperity" (shalom, which the caption inadequately renders as peace presumably to establish a link with the Gospel) like a river. (Note the reference to peace in the second reading also; otherwise there seems to be very little connection between the three readings.)

This reading, however, is appropriate for the post-Pentecost season, in which the Church enjoys the fruits of redemption, particularly the gift of the Spirit.

### Responsorial Psalm: 66:1-3, 4-5, 6-7, 16, 20

This is a psalm of thanksgiving for a national deliverance, pictured in imagery derived from the original Exodus: "He turned the sea into dry land: men passed through the river on foot."

The prophecies of Second Isaiah spoke of the return from exile in these terms, so the psalm forms a good response to the first reading. It is a thanksgiving for all the blessings of redemption and, for us particularly, for the gift of the Spirit.

The latter verses of the psalm (here represented by verses 16 and 20) take a surprisingly individualistic turn. It is reasonable to suppose that at some juncture two originally distinct psalms were combined.

The Christian sees a personal religious experience as part of the experience of the entire body, while the experience of the entire body is reflected in the experience of the individual.

The gift of the Holy Spirit is at once corporate and individual. At times in the history of the Church one aspect has been emphasized at the expense of the other. Both must be held in balance.

### Reading II: Galatians 6:14-18

It was Paul's custom to dictate his letters to an amanuensis, and then to take the pen himself and add a few concluding words. In these words he summarized and drove home the message of the whole letter.

The purpose of Galatians is to dissuade his Gentile readers from lapsing into syncretism. They are probably not Judaizing in the strict sense, for Paul has to remind them that any-

one who gets circumcised is obligated to keep the whole law, which would have been self-evident to a genuine Judaizer.

Paul “glories,” not in circumcision as his opponents do, but in the cross. What matters for him is that the believers have been re-created into a new existence, and in this new existence it is not the marks of circumcision but the marks of his apostolic sufferings, in which Christ crucified is manifested, that are important.

Finally, the Apostle gives his readers his blessing in a style that suggests (as the conclusion of other letters, especially 1 Corinthians, suggest even more clearly) that his letters were written to lead into the celebration of the Lord’s Supper.

Gospel: Luke 10:1-12, 17-20 (long form); 10:1-9 (short form)

All three synoptic Gospels record a mission of the Twelve during Jesus’ earthly ministry. The mission of the Seventy (some texts have seventy-two) is peculiar to Luke.

In chapter 9 Luke has already followed his Marcan source for the mission of the Twelve. Here he follows Q and his special material for the mission of the Seventy.

The Q material is also used by Matthew in his mission charge to the Twelve. So it is clear that the idea of a mission of the Seventy was created, not by Q or Mark, but by Luke or his special material.

There can be little doubt that the number seventy is symbolic. The mission of the Twelve represents the Church’s mission to Israel (twelve tribes); and the mission of the Seventy, its mission to the nations of the world (which according to Jewish tradition, numbered seventy or seventy-two).

Some critics maintain that the whole idea of missions during the earthly ministry is a retrojection of the post-Easter mission into the earthly life of Jesus. But it is noteworthy that the disciples are charged to proclaim Jesus’ own message: “The kingdom of God has come near to you,” not the Christological kerygma of the post-Easter Church.

The mission is to be characterized by urgency and detachment. The exact expression of this urgency and detachment is conditioned by the circumstances of the time. But in some form or other, urgency and detachment must always characterize the Church’s mission.

Two other features are worthy of note. First, it is not the disciples (and therefore not the Church) that initiate the mission. The initiative comes from the Lord of the harvest in response to the Church’s prayer.

The disciples return from their mission elated by their success, but Jesus at once dampens their elation: “Do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”

There is an even more significant joy for the missionary: prior to their mission, they had been admitted to the privilege of partaking in the eschatological salvation. When they forget that, they are tempted to think that the mission is their own cause and that the success is their own achievement.

Even an apostle or an evangelist is a justified sinner.

Reginald H. Fuller