**FIRST READING Isaiah 50:4-9a**

A reading from the book of Isaiah

The Sovereign Lord has taught me what to say, so that I can strengthen the weary. Every morning he makes me eager to hear what he is going to teach me. The Lord has given me understanding, and I have not rebelled or turned away from him. I bared my back to those who beat me. I did not stop them when they insulted me, when they pulled out the hairs of my beard and spit in my face. But their insults cannot hurt me because the Sovereign Lord gives me help. I brace myself to endure them. I know that I will not be disgraced, for God is near, and he will prove me innocent. Does anyone dare bring charges against me? Let us go to court together! Let him bring his accusation! The Sovereign Lord himself defends me— who, then, can prove me guilty?

**PSALM 116: 1-8**

**R** **I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.**

I love the Lord, because he hears me; he listens to my prayers. He listens to me every time I call to him. The danger of death was all around me; the horrors of the grave closed in on me; I was filled with fear and anxiety. **R**

Then I called to the Lord, “I beg you, Lord, save me!” The Lord is merciful and good; our God is compassionate. **R**

The Lord protects the helpless; when I was in danger, he saved me. Be confident, my heart, because the Lord has been good to me. **R**

The Lord saved me from death; he stopped my tears and kept me from defeat. **R**

**SECOND READING James 3: 1-12**

A reading from the letter of James

My friends, not many of you should become teachers. As you know, we teachers will be judged with greater strictness than others. All of us often make mistakes. But if a person never makes a mistake in what he says, he is perfect and is also able to control his whole being. We put a bit into the mouth of a horse to make it obey us, and we are able to make it go where we want. Or think of a ship: big as it is and driven by such strong winds, it can be steered by a very small rudder, and it goes wherever the pilot wants it to go. So it is with the tongue: small as it is, it can boast about great things. Just think how large a forest can be set on fire by a tiny flame! And the tongue is like a fire. It is a world of wrong, occupying its place in our bodies and spreading evil through our whole being. It sets on fire the entire course of our existence with the fire that comes to it from hell itself. We humans are able to tame and have tamed all other creatures—wild animals and birds, reptiles and fish. But no one has ever been able to tame the tongue. It is evil and uncontrollable, full of deadly poison. We use it to give thanks to our Lord and Father and also to curse other people, who are created in the likeness of God. Words of thanksgiving and cursing pour out from the same mouth. My friends, this should not happen! No spring of water pours out sweet water and bitter water from the same opening. A fig tree, my friends, cannot bear olives; a grapevine cannot bear figs, nor can a salty spring produce sweet water.

**GOSPEL Mark 8:27-38**

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

**Glory to you O Lord.**

Then Jesus and his disciples went away to the villages near Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, “Tell me, who do people say I am?” “Some say that you are John the Baptist,” they answered; “others say that you are Elijah, while others say that you are one of the prophets.” “What about you?” he asked them. “Who do you say I am?” Peter answered, “You are the Messiah.” Then Jesus ordered them, “Do not tell anyone about me.” Then Jesus began to teach his disciples: “The Son of Man must suffer much and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the teachers of the Law. He will be put to death, but three days later he will rise to life.” He made this very clear to them. So Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But Jesus turned around, looked at his disciples, and rebuked Peter. “Get away from me, Satan,” he said. “Your thoughts don't come from God but from human nature!” Then Jesus called the crowd and his disciples to him. “If any of you want to come with me,” he told them, “you must forget yourself, carry your cross, and follow me. For if you want to save your own life, you will lose it; but if you lose your life for me and for the gospel, you will save it. Do you gain anything if you win the whole world but lose your life? Of course not! There is nothing you can give to regain your life. If you are ashamed of me and of my teaching in this godless and wicked day, then the Son of Man will be ashamed of you when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**