

## Daily Readings

Thursday of the First Week of Lent

26 February 2026

First reading

Esther 4:17m, 17o-17q, 17x-17z

**'I have no helper but you, Lord.'**

Esther the queen seized with deathly anxiety, fled to the Lord; and she prayed to the Lord God of Israel and said: 'O my Lord, you only are our King; help me, who am alone and have no helper but you, for my danger is in my hand. Ever since I was born I have heard in the tribe of my family that you, O Lord, took Israel out of all the nations and our fathers from among all their ancestors for an everlasting inheritance and that you did for them all that you promised. Remember, O Lord; make yourself known in this time of our affliction and give me courage, O King of the gods and Master of all dominion! Put eloquent speech in my mouth before the lion and turn his heart to hate the man who is fighting against us, so that there may be an end of him and those who agree with him. But save us by your hand and help me, who am alone and have no helper but you, O Lord.'

**Responsorial Psalm**

**Ps 138(137):1-2a. 2b-3. 3. 7c-8. R3a**

***On the day I called, you answered me, O Lord.***

I thank you, LORD, with all my heart;  
you have heard the words of my mouth.  
In the presence of the angels I praise you.  
I bow down towards your holy Temple.

***On the day I called, you answered me, O Lord.***

I give thanks to your name  
for your merciful love and your faithfulness.  
For you have exalted over all  
your name and your promise.  
On the day I called, you answered me;  
you increased the strength of my soul.

***On the day I called, you answered me, O Lord.***

With your right hand you save me;  
the LORD will accomplish this for me.  
O LORD, your merciful love is eternal;  
discard not the work of your hands.

***On the day I called, you answered me, O Lord.***

**Gospel Acclamation**  
**Psalm 51(50):12a, 14a**

**Glory and praise to you, O Christ.**  
Create a pure heart for me, O God;  
restore in me the joy of your salvation.  
**Glory and praise to you, O Christ.**

**Gospel**  
**Matthew 7:7-12**

**‘Everyone who asks receives.’**

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: ‘Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him! So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.’

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