

## FEBRUARY 3, 2012

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Friday of the Fourth Week in Ordinary Time  
Lectionary: 327

### READING 1 SIR 47:2-11

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Like the choice fat of the sacred offerings,  
so was David in Israel.  
He made sport of lions as though they were kids,  
and of bears, like lambs of the flock.  
As a youth he slew the giant  
and wiped out the people's disgrace,  
When his hand let fly the slingstone  
that crushed the pride of Goliath.  
Since he called upon the Most High God,  
who gave strength to his right arm  
To defeat the skilled warrior  
and raise up the might of his people,  
Therefore the women sang his praises,  
and ascribed to him tens of thousands  
and praised him when they blessed the Lord.  
When he assumed the royal crown, he battled  
and subdued the enemy on every side.  
He destroyed the hostile Philistines  
and shattered their power till our own day.  
With his every deed he offered thanks  
to God Most High, in words of praise.  
With his whole being he loved his Maker  
and daily had his praises sung;  
He set singers before the altar and by their voices  
he made sweet melodies,  
He added beauty to the feasts  
and solemnized the seasons of each year  
So that when the Holy Name was praised,  
before daybreak the sanctuary would resound.  
The LORD forgave him his sins  
and exalted his strength forever;  
He conferred on him the rights of royalty  
and established his throne in Israel.

### RESPONSORIAL PSALM PS 18:31, 47 AND 50, 51

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R. (see 47b) **Blessed be God my salvation!**  
God's way is unerring,  
the promise of the LORD is fire-tried;  
he is a shield to all who take refuge in him.  
R. **Blessed be God my salvation!**

The LORD live! And blessed be my Rock!  
Extolled be God my savior.  
Therefore will I proclaim you, O LORD, among the nations,  
and I will sing praise to your name.

**R. Blessed be God my salvation!**

You who gave great victories to your king  
and showed kindness to your anointed,  
to David and his posterity forever.

**R. Blessed be God my salvation!**

### **GOSPEL MK 6:14-29**

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King Herod heard about Jesus, for his fame had become widespread,  
and people were saying,  
"John the Baptist has been raised from the dead;  
that is why mighty powers are at work in him."  
Others were saying, "He is Elijah";  
still others, "He is a prophet like any of the prophets."  
But when Herod learned of it, he said,  
"It is John whom I beheaded. He has been raised up."

Herod was the one who had John arrested and bound in prison  
on account of Herodias,  
the wife of his brother Philip, whom he had married.  
John had said to Herod,  
"It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife."  
Herodias harbored a grudge against him  
and wanted to kill him but was unable to do so.  
Herod feared John, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man,  
and kept him in custody.  
When he heard him speak he was very much perplexed,  
yet he liked to listen to him.  
Herodias had an opportunity one day when Herod, on his birthday,  
gave a banquet for his courtiers, his military officers,  
and the leading men of Galilee.  
His own daughter came in and performed a dance  
that delighted Herod and his guests.  
The king said to the girl,  
"Ask of me whatever you wish and I will grant it to you."  
He even swore many things to her,  
"I will grant you whatever you ask of me,  
even to half of my kingdom."  
She went out and said to her mother,  
"What shall I ask for?"  
Her mother replied, "The head of John the Baptist."  
The girl hurried back to the king's presence and made her request,  
"I want you to give me at once on a platter  
the head of John the Baptist."

The king was deeply distressed,  
but because of his oaths and the guests  
he did not wish to break his word to her.  
So he promptly dispatched an executioner  
with orders to bring back his head.  
He went off and beheaded him in the prison.  
He brought in the head on a platter  
and gave it to the girl.  
The girl in turn gave it to her mother.  
When his disciples heard about it,  
they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.