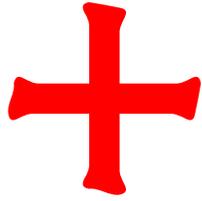


L ECTIONARY READINGS FOR YEAR "A"
The Revised Common Lectionary
(Track 1) Using Translations From
The New Jerusalem Bible,
The New Revised Standard Version,
And A Few Additional Sources
To Make The Readings Clearer

Used In The Year Of Grace 2017

**ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA EPISCOPAL CHURCH
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA**



DECEMBER 25, 2016

CHRISTMAS DAY

THE PROPHET ISAIAH 9:2-7

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness--on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.

For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. ❖

DECEMBER 25, 2016

CHRISTMAS DAY

PAUL'S LETTER TO TITUS 2:11-14

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds. ❖

DECEMBER 25, 2016

CHRISTMAS DAY

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO LUKE 2:1-20**

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see-- I am

bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. ❖

JANUARY 1, 2017

THE HOLY NAME

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS 6:22-27

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the Israelites: You shall say to them,

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be
gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance
upon you, and give you peace.

So they shall put my name on the Israelites, and I will
bless them. ❖

JANUARY 1, 2017

THE HOLY NAME

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS 4:4-7

When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God. ❖

JANUARY 1, 2017

THE HOLY NAME

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO LUKE 2:15-21**

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. ❖

JANUARY 8, 2017

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY:

THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

THE PROPHET ISAIAH 42:1-9

Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom my soul delights. I have sent my spirit upon him, he will bring fair judgment to the nations. He does not cry out or raise his voice, his voice is not heard in the street; he does not break the crushed reed or snuff the faltering wick. Faithfully he presents fair judgment; he will not grow faint, he will not be crushed until he has established fair judgment on earth, and the coasts and islands are waiting for his instruction. Thus says God, the LORD, who created the heavens and spread them out, who hammered into shape the earth and what comes from it, who gave breath to the people on it, and spirit to those who walk on it: I, the LORD, have called you in saving justice, I have grasped you by the hand and shaped you; I have made you a covenant of the people and light to the nations, to open the eyes of the blind, to free captives from prison, and those who live in darkness from the dungeon. I am Yahweh, that is my name! I shall not yield my glory to another, nor my honor to idols. See how the former predictions have

come true. Fresh things I now reveal; before they
appear I tell you of them. ❖

JANUARY 8, 2017

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY:

THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 10:34-43

Peter addressed the household of Cornelius, “I now really understand,” he said, “that God has no favorites, but that anybody of any nationality who fears God and does what is right is acceptable. God sent the word to the people of Israel, and it was to them that the good news of peace was brought by Jesus Christ—he is the Lord of all. You know what happened all over Judea, how Jesus of Nazareth began in Galilee, after John had been preaching baptism. God had anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and because God was with him, Jesus went about doing good and curing all who had fallen into the power of the devil.

Now we are witnesses to everything he did throughout the countryside of Judea and in Jerusalem itself: and they killed him by hanging him on a tree, yet on the third day God raised him to life and allowed him to be seen, not by the whole people but only by certain witnesses that God had chosen beforehand. Now we are those witnesses—we have eaten and drunk with him

after his resurrection from the dead—and he has ordered us to proclaim this to his people and to bear witness that God has appointed him to judge everyone, alive or dead. It is to him that all the prophets bear this witness: that all who believe in Jesus will have their sins forgiven through his name.” ❖

JANUARY 8, 2017

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY:

THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 3:13-17**

Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. John tried to dissuade him, with the words, “It is I who need baptism from you, and yet you come to me!” But Jesus replied, “Leave it like this for the time being; it is fitting that we should, in this way, do all that uprightness demands.” Then John gave in to him. And when Jesus had been baptized he at once came up from the water, and suddenly the heavens opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming down on him. And suddenly there was a voice from heaven, “This is my Son, the Beloved; my favor rests on him.” ❖

JANUARY 15, 2017

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

THE PROPHET ISAIAH 49:1-7

Coasts and islands listen to me, pay attention, distant peoples. The LORD called me when I was in the womb, before my birth God had pronounced my name. That One made my mouth like a sharp sword, God hid me in the shadow of the hand. The Almighty made me into a sharpened arrow and concealed me in the quiver. God said to me, “Israel, you are my servant, through whom I shall manifest my glory.” But I said, “My toil has been futile, I have exhausted myself for nothing, to no purpose.” Yet all the while my cause was with Yahweh and my reward with my God. And now the LORD has spoken, who formed me in the womb to be a servant, to bring Jacob back to God and to re-unite Israel to him—I shall be honored in the LORD’s eyes, and my God has been my strength.

God said, “It is not enough for you to be my servant, to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back the survivors of Israel; I shall make you a light to the nations so that my salvation may reach the remotest parts of earth.”

Thus says the LORD, the redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, to the one who is despised, detested by the nation, to the slave of despots: Rulers will stand up when they see, princes will see and bow low, because of the LORD who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel who has chosen you. ❖

JANUARY 15, 2017

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS 1:1-9

Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and Sosthenes, our brother, to the church of God in Corinth, to those who have been consecrated in Christ Jesus and called to be God's holy people, with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord as well as ours. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I am continually thanking God about you, for the grace of God which you have been given in Christ Jesus; in him you have been richly endowed in every kind of utterance and knowledge; so firmly has witness to Christ taken root in you. And so you are not lacking in any gift as you wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed; he will continue to give you strength till the very end, so that you will be irreproachable on the Day of our Lord Jesus Christ. You can rely on God, who has called you to be partners with Jesus Christ our Lord.



JANUARY 15, 2017

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO JOHN 1:29-42**

John the Baptist saw Jesus coming towards him and said, “Look, there is the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. It was of him that I said, ‘Behind me comes one who has passed ahead of me because he existed before me.’ I did not know him myself, and yet my purpose in coming to baptize with water was so that he might be revealed to Israel.” And John declared, “I saw the Spirit come down on him like a dove from heaven and rest on him. I did not know him myself, but the One who sent me to baptize with water had said to me, ‘The person on whom you see the Spirit come down and rest is the one who is to baptize with the Holy Spirit.’ I have seen and I testify that he is the Chosen One of God.”

The next day, as John stood there again with two of his disciples, Jesus went past, and John looked towards him and said, “Look, there is the lamb of God.” And the two disciples heard what he said and followed Jesus. Jesus

turned round, saw them following and said, “What do you want?” They answered, “Rabbi”—which means Teacher—“where do you live?” He replied, “Come and see.” So they went and saw where he lived, and stayed with him that day. It was about the tenth hour. One of these two who became followers of Jesus after hearing what John had said was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother and say to him, “We have found the Messiah”—which means the Christ—and he took Simon to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon son of John; you are to be called Cephas”—which means Rock. ❖

JANUARY 22, 2017

THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

THE PROPHET ISAIAH 9:1-4

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; on the inhabitants of a country in shadow dark as death light has blazed forth. You have enlarged the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at harvest time, as they exult when they are dividing the spoils. For the yoke that weighed on it, the bar across its shoulders, the rod of its oppressor, these you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the footgear clanking over the ground and all the clothing rolled in blood will be burnt, will be food for the flames. ❖

JANUARY 22, 2017

THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS 1:10-18

Brothers and sisters, I urge you, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, not to have factions among yourselves, but all to be in agreement in what you profess; so that you are perfectly united in your beliefs and judgments. From what Chloe's people have been telling me about you, brothers and sisters, it is clear that there are serious differences among you. What I mean is this: every one of you is declaring, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." Has Christ been split up? Was it Paul that was crucified for you, or was it in Paul's name that you were baptized? I am thankful I did not baptize any of you, except Crispus and Gaius, so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name. Yes, I did baptize the family of Stephanas, too; but besides these I do not think I baptized anyone. After all, Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel; and not by means of wisdom of language, wise words which would make the cross of Christ pointless. The message of the cross is folly for those who are on the way to ruin, but for those of us who are on the road to salvation it is the power of God. ❖

JANUARY 22, 2017

THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 4:12-23**

When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee, and leaving Nazareth he went and settled in Capernaum, beside the lake, on the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali. This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: Land of Zebulun! Land of Naphtali! Way of the sea beyond Jordan. Galilee of the nations! The people that lived in darkness have seen a great light; on those who lived in a country of shadow dark as death a light has dawned. From then onwards Jesus began his proclamation with the message, “Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is close at hand.”

As Jesus was walking by the Lake of Galilee he saw two brothers, Simon, who was called Peter, and his brother Andrew; they were making a cast into the lake with their net, for they were fishermen. And he said to them, “Come after me and I will make you fishers of people.” And at once they left their nets and followed him. Going on from there he saw another pair of brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John;

they were in their boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. And at once, leaving the boat and their father, they followed him. He went round the whole of Galilee teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing all kinds of disease and illness among the people. ❖

JANUARY 29, 2017

THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

THE PROPHET MICAH 6:1-8

Hear what the Lord says:

Rise, plead your case before the mountains,
and let the hills hear your voice.

Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the Lord,
and you enduring foundations of the earth;
for the Lord has a controversy with his people,
and he will contend with Israel.

‘O my people, what have I done to you?

In what have I wearied you? Answer me!

For I brought you up from the land of Egypt,
and redeemed you from the house of slavery;
and I sent before you Moses,
Aaron, and Miriam.

O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab
devised,

what Balaam son of Beor answered him,
and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal,
that you may know the saving acts of the Lord.’

‘With what shall I come before the Lord,
and bow myself before God on high?

Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?

Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,
with tens of thousands of rivers of oil?

Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?’

He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God? ❖

JANUARY 29, 2017

THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS 1:18-31

For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.'

Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For those of Israel demand signs and those of Greece desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling-block to Israelites and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Israelites and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were

powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, 'Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.' ❖

JANUARY 29, 2017

THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 5:1-12**

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

‘Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

‘Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

‘Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

‘Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

‘Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

‘Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

‘Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. ❖

FEBRUARY 5, 2017

THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

THE PROPHET ISAIAH 58:1-9A, (9B-12)

(The verses in parenthesis may be omitted – ask the preacher)

Shout for all you are worth, do not hold back, raise your voice like a trumpet. To my people proclaim their rebellious acts, to the House of Jacob, their sins. They seek for me day after day, they long to know my ways, like a nation that has acted uprightly and not forsaken the law of its God. They ask me for laws that are upright, they long to be near God: 'Why have we fasted, if you do not see, why mortify ourselves if you never notice?' Look, you seek your own pleasure on your fast-days and you exploit all your workmen; look, the only purpose of your fasting is to quarrel and squabble and strike viciously with your fist. Fasting like yours today will never make your voice heard on high. Is that the sort of fast that pleases me, a day when a person inflicts pain on himself? Hanging your head like a reed, spreading out sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call fasting, a day acceptable to the LORD?

Is not this the sort of fast that pleases me: to break unjust fetters, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the

oppressed go free, and to break all yokes? Is it not sharing your food with the hungry, and sheltering the homeless poor; if you see someone lacking clothes, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own kin? Then your light will blaze out like the dawn and your wound be quickly healed over. Saving justice will go ahead of you and the LORD's glory come behind you. Then you will cry for help and the LORD will answer; you will call and he will say, 'I am here.'

(The following section may be omitted)

(If you do away with the yoke, the clenched fist and malicious words, if you deprive yourself for the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, your light will rise in the darkness, and your darkest hour will be like noon. The LORD will always guide you, will satisfy your needs in the scorched land; he will give strength to your bones and you will be like a watered garden, like a flowing spring whose waters never run dry. Your ancient ruins will be rebuilt; you will build on age -- old foundations. You will be called 'Breach-mender', 'Restorer of streets to be lived in'.) ❖

FEBRUARY 5, 2017

THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS 2:1-12, (13-16)

(The verses in parenthesis may be omitted – ask the preacher)

Now when I came to you, brothers, I did not come with any brilliance of oratory or wise argument to announce to you the mystery of God. I was resolved that the only knowledge I would have while I was with you was knowledge of Jesus, and of him as the crucified Christ. I came among you in weakness, in fear and great trembling and what I spoke and proclaimed was not meant to convince by philosophical argument, but to demonstrate the convincing power of the Spirit, so that your faith should depend not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

But still, to those who have reached maturity, we do talk of wisdom, not, it is true, a philosophy of this age or of the rulers of this age, who will not last long now. It is of the mysterious wisdom of God that we talk, the wisdom that was hidden, which God predestined to be for our glory before the ages began. None of the rulers of the age recognized it; for if they had recognized it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; but it

is as scripture says: What no eye has seen and no ear has heard, what the mind of man cannot visualize; all that God has prepared for those who love him; to us, though, God has given revelation through the Spirit, for the Spirit explores the depths of everything, even the depths of God. After all, is there anyone who knows the qualities of anyone except his own spirit, within him; and in the same way, nobody knows the qualities of God except the Spirit of God. Now, the Spirit we have received is not the spirit of the world but God's own Spirit, so that we may understand the lavish gifts God has given us.

(The following section may be omitted)

(And these are what we speak of, not in the terms learnt from human philosophy, but in terms learnt from the Spirit, fitting spiritual language to spiritual things. The natural person has no room for the gifts of God's Spirit; to him they are folly; he cannot recognize them, because their value can be assessed only in the Spirit. The spiritual person, on the other hand, can assess the value of everything, and that person's value cannot be assessed by anybody else. For: who has ever known the mind of the Lord? Who has ever been his adviser? But we are those who have the mind of Christ.) ❖

FEBRUARY 5, 2017

THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 5:13-20**

'You are salt for the earth. But if salt loses its taste, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out to be trampled under people's feet. 'You are light for the world. A city built on a hilltop cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub; they put it on the lampstand where it shines for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine in people's sight, so that, seeing your good works, they may give praise to your Father in heaven. 'Do not imagine that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to complete them. In truth I tell you, till heaven and earth disappear, not one dot, not one little stroke, is to disappear from the Law until all its purpose is achieved. Therefore, anyone who infringes even one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be considered the least in the kingdom of Heaven; but the person who keeps them and teaches them will be considered great in the kingdom of Heaven. 'For I tell you, if your uprightness does not surpass that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never get into the kingdom of Heaven. ❖

FEBRUARY 12, 2017

THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

DEUTERONOMY 30:15-20

See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. ❖

FEBRUARY 12, 2017

THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS 3:1-9

And so, brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even now you are still not ready, for you are still of the flesh. For as long as there is jealousy and quarrelling among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving according to human inclinations? For when one says, 'I belong to Paul', and another, 'I belong to Apollos', are you not merely human?

What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each. For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building. ❖

FEBRUARY 12, 2017

THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 5:21-37**

‘You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, “You shall not murder”; and “whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.” But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, “You fool”, you will be liable to the hell of fire. So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

‘You have heard that it was said, “You shall not commit adultery.” But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her

in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell.

‘It was also said, “Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.” But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

‘Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, “You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.” But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Let your word be “Yes, Yes” or “No, No”; anything more than this comes from the evil one. ❖

FEBRUARY 19, 2017

THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

LEVITICUS 19:1-2,9-18

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them: You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.

When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. You shall not strip your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the alien: I am the Lord your God.

You shall not steal; you shall not deal falsely; and you shall not lie to one another. And you shall not swear falsely by my name, profaning the name of your God: I am the Lord.

You shall not defraud your neighbor; you shall not steal; and you shall not keep for yourself the wages of a laborer until morning. You shall not revile the deaf or put a stumbling-block before the blind; you shall fear your God: I am the Lord.

You shall not render an unjust judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbor. You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not profit by the blood of your neighbor: I am the Lord.

You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbor, or you will incur guilt yourself. You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord. ❖

FEBRUARY 19, 2017

THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS 3:10-11, 16-23

According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building on it. Each builder must choose with care how to build on it. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

Do not deceive yourselves. If you think that you are wise in this age, you should become fools so that you may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, 'He catches the wise in their craftiness', and again, 'The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile.'

So let no one boast about human leaders. For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all belong to you, and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God. ❖

FEBRUARY 19, 2017

THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 5:38-48**

‘You have heard that it was said, “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.” But I say to you, do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you.

‘You have heard that it was said, “You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.” But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those that curse you, do good to those that hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you, and persecute you so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax-collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect. ❖

FEBRUARY 26, 2017

THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

EXODUS 24:12-18

The LORD said to Moses, “Come up to me on the mountain. Stay there, and I will give you the stone tablets—the law and the commandment—which I have written for their instruction.” Moses made ready, with Joshua his assistant, and they went up the mountain of God. He said to the elders, “Wait here for us until we come back to you. You have Aaron and Hur with you; if anyone has any matter to settle, let him go to them.” Moses then went up the mountain. Cloud covered the mountain. The glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai and the cloud covered it for six days. On the seventh day the LORD called to Moses from inside the cloud. To the watching Israelites, the glory of the LORD looked like a devouring fire on the mountaintop. Moses went right into the cloud and went on up the mountain. Moses stayed on the mountain for forty days and forty nights. ❖

FEBRUARY 26, 2017

THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

THE SECOND LETTER OF PETER 1:16-21

When we told you about the power and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, we were not slavishly repeating cleverly invented myths; no, we had seen his majesty with our own eyes. He was honored and glorified by God the Father, when a voice came to him from the transcendent Glory, “This is my Son, the Beloved; he enjoys my favor.” We ourselves heard this voice from heaven, when we were with him on the holy mountain. So we have confirmation of the words of the prophets; and you will be right to pay attention to it as to a lamp for lighting a way through the dark, until the dawn comes and the morning star rises in your minds. At the same time, we must recognize that the interpretation of scriptural prophecy is never a matter for the individual. For no prophecy ever came from human initiative. When people spoke for God it was the Holy Spirit that moved them. ❖

FEBRUARY 26, 2017

THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 17:1-9**

Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. There in their presence he was transfigured: his face shone like the sun and his clothes became as dazzling as light. And suddenly Moses and Elijah appeared to them; they were talking with him.

Then Peter spoke to Jesus. “Lord,” he said, “it is wonderful for us to be here; if you want me to, I will make three shelters here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.”

He was still speaking when suddenly a bright cloud covered them with shadow, and suddenly from the cloud there came a voice which said, “This is my Son, the Beloved; he enjoys my favor. Listen to him.” When they heard this, the disciples fell on their faces, overcome with fear. But Jesus came up and touched them, saying, “Stand up, do not be afraid.” And when they raised their eyes they saw no one but Jesus. As they came down from the mountain Jesus gave them this order, “Tell no one about this vision until the Son of man has risen from the dead.” ❖

MARCH 5, 2017

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

THE BOOK OF GENESIS 2:15-17, 3:1-7

The LORD God took the human and settled that one in the garden of Eden to cultivate and take care of it. Then the LORD God gave the human this command, “You are free to eat of all the trees in the garden. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you are not to eat; for, the day you eat of that, you are doomed to die.”

Now, the snake was the most subtle of all the wild animals that the LORD God had made. It asked the woman, “Did God really say you were not to eat from any of the trees in the garden?” The woman answered the snake, “We may eat the fruit of the trees in the garden. But of the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden God said, ‘You must not eat it, nor touch it, under pain of death.’” Then the snake said to the woman, “No! You will not die! God knows in fact that the day you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, knowing good from evil.”

The woman saw that the tree was good to eat and pleasing to the eye, and that it was enticing for the wisdom that it could give. So she took some of its fruit and ate it. She also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they realized that they were naked. So they sewed fig leaves together to make themselves loincloths. ❖

MARCH 5, 2017

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS 5:12-19

It was through one human that sin came into the world, and through sin death, and thus death has spread through the whole human race because everyone has sinned. Sin already existed in the world before there was any law, even though sin is not reckoned when there is no law. Nonetheless, death reigned over all from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sin was not the breaking of a commandment, as Adam's was. He prefigured the One who was to come.

But there is no comparison between the free gift and the offence. If death came to many through the offence of one human, how much greater an effect the grace of God has had, coming to so many and so plentifully as a free gift through the one human Jesus Christ! Again, there is no comparison between the gift and the offence of one human. One single offence brought condemnation, but now, after many offences, have come the free gift and so acquittal! It was by one human's offence that death came to reign over all, but how much greater the reign in life of those who receive

the fullness of grace and the gift of saving justice, through the one human, Jesus Christ. One human's offence brought condemnation on all humanity; and one human's good act has brought justification and life to all humanity. Just as by one human's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one human's obedience are many to be made upright. ❖

MARCH 5, 2017

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 4:1-11**

Jesus was led by the Spirit out into the desert to be put to the test by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, after which he was hungry, and the tester came and said to him, “If you are Son of God, tell these stones to turn into loaves.” But Jesus replied, “Scripture says: People live not on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.”

The devil then took Jesus to the holy city and set him on the parapet of the Temple. “If you are Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down; for scripture says: The Lord has given the angels orders about you, and they will carry you in their arms in case you trip over a stone.” Jesus said to him, “Scripture also says: Do not put the Lord your God to the test.”

Next, taking Jesus to a very high mountain, the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. And he said to him, “I will give you all these, if you fall at my feet and do me homage.” Then Jesus replied, “Away with you, Satan! For scripture says: The

Lord your God is the one to whom you must do
homage; that One alone you must serve.” Then the
devil left Jesus, and suddenly angels appeared and
looked after him. ❖

MARCH 12, 2017

THE FEAST OF ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA (TRANSFERRED)

THE BOOK OF EXODUS 33:12-17

Moses said to the Lord, “You are telling me to lead this people on; but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, ‘You are my intimate friend,’ and also, ‘You have found favor with me.’ Now, if I have found favor with you, do let me know what you are up to, so that I may continue to find favor with you. After all, this nation is your own people.”

The Lord answered, “I myself will go along, and will set your heart at rest.”

Moses replied, “If you are not coming yourself, do not make us move on from here. For how can it be known that we, your people and I, have found favor with you, except by your coming with us? This way we, your people and I, will be marked out from every other people on earth.”

The Lord said to Moses, “Again I will do what you have asked, because you have found favor with me and you are my intimate friend.” ❖

*Or this alternate first reading from
“Holy Women, Holy Men”.*

MARCH 12, 2017

THE FEAST OF ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA (TRANSFERRED)

THE BOOK OF WISDOM 7: 24-28

For wisdom is more mobile than any motion;
because of her pureness she pervades and penetrates all
things.

For she is a breath of the power of God,
and a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty;
therefore nothing defiled gains entrance into her.

For she is a reflection of eternal light,
a spotless mirror of the working of God,
and an image of his goodness.

Although she is but one, she can do all things,
and while remaining in herself, she renews all things;
in every generation she passes into holy souls
and makes them friends of God, and prophets;
for God loves nothing so much as the person who lives
with wisdom. ❖

MARCH 12, 2017

THE FEAST OF ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA (TRANSFERRED)

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE PHILIPPIANS 3:10-15

I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us, then, who are mature, be of the same mind. ❖

*Or this alternate second reading from
“Holy Women, Holy Men”.*

MARCH 12, 2017

THE FEAST OF ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA (TRANSFERRED)

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE EPHESIANS 2: 17-22

So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling-place for God. ❖

MARCH 12, 2017

THE FEAST OF ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA (TRANSFERRED)

A READING FROM GREGORY OF NYSSA

I have briefly traced out the life of the great Moses like a pattern of beauty, so that each one of us might copy the beauty shown here by imitating his way of life.

What surer testimony to Moses' perfection could we find, than God's own voice saying to him, "You are my most intimate friend"?

Now it is time for you, noble friend, to look to Moses' example, and by transferring its deeper meaning to your own life, to be known by God and to become God's friend. This is true perfection: not to shun wickedness for fear of punishment, like slaves, nor to do good because we hope for rewards, as if cashing in on a deal. On the contrary, setting aside all the prizes we hope for – and have been promised – we regard falling from God's friendship as the only thing dreadful, and we consider becoming God's friend the only thing truly worthwhile. This I said, is the perfection of life.

As God lifts your understanding to what is magnificent and divine, whatever you find – and I know you will find plenty – will surely serve the common good in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Here Gregory of Nyssa ended his writings, and died in the Year of Grace three hundred ninety-five. ❖

MARCH 12, 2017

THE FEAST OF ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA (TRANSFERRED)

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO JOHN 14:23-26**

Jesus said, ‘Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me.

‘I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. ❖

MARCH 12, 2017

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

THE BOOK OF GENESIS 12:1-4A

The LORD said to Abram, “Leave your country, your kindred and your parents’ house for a country which I shall show you; and I shall make you a great nation, I shall bless you and make your name famous; you are to be a blessing! I shall bless those who bless you, and shall curse those who curse you, and all clans on earth will bless themselves by you.”

So Abram went as the LORD told him. ❖

MARCH 12, 2017

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS 4:1-5, 13-17

What do we say about Abraham, the ancestor from whom we are descended physically? If Abraham had been justified because of what he had done, then he would have had something to boast about.

But not before God: does not scripture say: Abraham put his faith in God and this was reckoned to him as uprightness?

Now, when someone works, the wages for this are not considered as a favor but as due; however, when someone, without working, puts faith in the one who justifies the godless, it is this faith that is reckoned as uprightness.

For the promise to Abraham and his descendants that he should inherit the world was not through the Law, but through the uprightness of faith. For if it is those who live by the Law who will gain the inheritance, faith is worthless and the promise is without force; for the Law produces nothing but God's retribution, and it is

only where there is no Law that it is possible to live without breaking the Law.

That is why the promise is to faith, so that it comes as a free gift and is secure for all the descendants, not only those who rely on the Law, but all those others who rely on the faith of Abraham, the ancestor of us all (as scripture says: I have made you the father of many nations).

Abraham is our father in the eyes of God, in whom Abraham put his faith, and who brings the dead to life and calls into existence what does not yet exist. ❖

MARCH 12, 2017

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO JOHN 3:1-17**

There was one of the Pharisees called Nicodemus, an elite resident of Jerusalem, who came to Jesus by night and said, “Rabbi, we know that you have come from God as a teacher; for no one could perform the signs that you do unless God were with him.”

Jesus answered: “In all truth I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.”

Nicodemus said, “How can anyone who is already old be born? Is it possible to go back into the womb again and be born?”

Jesus replied: “In all truth I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born through water and the Spirit; what is born of human nature is human; what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be surprised when I say: ‘You must be born from above.’

The wind blows where it pleases; you can hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or

where it is going. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

“How is that possible?” asked Nicodemus.

Jesus replied, “You are the Teacher of Israel, and you do not know these things! In all truth I tell you, we speak only about what we know and witness only to what we have seen and yet you people reject our evidence. If you do not believe me when I speak to you about earthly things, how will you believe me when I speak to you about heavenly things?

No one has gone up to heaven except the one who came down from heaven, the Son of man; as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so must the Son of man be lifted up so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him. For this is how God loved the world: God gave the only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world not to judge the world, but so that through him the world might be saved.” ❖

MARCH 19, 2017

THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

THE BOOK OF EXODUS 17:1-7

The whole community of Israelites left the desert of Sin, traveling by stages as the LORD ordered. They pitched camp at Rephidim where there was no water for the people to drink. The people took issue with Moses for this and said, “Give us water to drink.” Moses replied, “Why take issue with me? Why do you put the LORD to the test?” But tormented by thirst, the people complained to Moses. “Why did you bring us out of Egypt,” they said, “only to make us, our children and our livestock, die of thirst?”

Moses appealed to the LORD for help. “How am I to deal with this people?” he said. “Any moment now they will stone me!” The LORD then said to Moses, “Go on ahead of the people, taking some of the elders of Israel with you; in your hand take the staff with which you struck the River, and go. I shall be waiting for you there on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out for the people to drink.” This was what Moses did, with the elders of Israel looking on. He gave the place the names Massah [which means ‘test’] and

Meribah [which means ‘quarrel’] because of the Israelites’ contentiousness, and because they put the LORD to the test by saying, “Is the LORD with us, or not?” ❖

MARCH 19, 2017

THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS 5:1-11

Now that we have been justified by faith, we are at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; it is through him, by faith, that we have been admitted into God's favor in which we are living, and look forward exultantly to God's glory. Not only that; let us boast, too, in our hardships, understanding that hardship develops perseverance, and perseverance develops a tested character, something that gives us hope, and a hope which will not let us down, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.

When we were still helpless, at the appointed time, Christ died for the godless. You could hardly find anyone ready to die even for someone upright; though it is just possible that, for a really good person, someone might undertake to die. So it is proof of God's own love for us that Christ died for us while we were still sinners. How much more can we be sure, therefore, that now that we have been justified by his blood, we shall be saved through him from wrath. For if while we were

enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more can we be sure that, being now reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. What is more, we glory in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have already gained our reconciliation. ❖

MARCH 19, 2017

THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO JOHN 4:5-42**

Jesus came to the Samaritan town called Sychar near the land that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there and Jesus, tired by the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Give me something to drink." His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Judean. How is it that you ask me, a Samaritan, for something to drink?" (Judeans, of course, do not associate with Samaritans.) Jesus replied to her: "If you only knew what God is offering and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me something to drink,' you would have been the one to ask, and he would have given you living water." "You have no bucket, sir," she answered, "and the well is deep: how do you get this living water? Are you a greater man than our father Jacob, who gave us this well and drank from it himself with his sons and his cattle?"

Jesus replied: “Whoever drinks this water will be thirsty again; but no one who drinks the water that I shall give will ever be thirsty again: the water that I shall give will become a spring of water within, welling up for eternal life.” “Sir,” said the woman, “give me some of that water, so that I may never be thirsty or come here again to draw water.” “Go and call your husband,” said Jesus to her, “and come back here.” The woman answered, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You are right to say, ‘I have no husband’; for although you have had five, the one you now have is not your husband. You spoke the truth there.”

“I see you are a prophet, sir,” said the woman. “Our ancestors worshipped on this mountain, though you say that Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.” Jesus said: “Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship God neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know; for salvation comes from Covenant of Israel. But the hour is coming—indeed is already here—when true worshippers will worship God in spirit and truth: that is the kind of worshipper God seeks. God is spirit, and those who worship must worship in spirit and truth.”

The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah—that is, Christ—is coming; and when he comes he will explain everything.” Jesus said, “That is who I am, I who speak to you.”

At this point his disciples returned and were surprised to find him speaking to a woman, though none of them asked, “What do you want from her?” or, “What are you talking to her about?” The woman put down her water jar and hurried back to the town to tell the people, “Come and see one who has told me everything I have done; could this be the Christ?” This brought people out of the town and they made their way towards him.

Meanwhile, the disciples were urging him, “Rabbi, do have something to eat,” but he said, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” So the disciples said to one another, “Has someone brought him food?” But Jesus said: “My food is to do the will of the one who sent me, and to complete the work. Do you not have a saying: Four months and then the harvest? Well, I tell you, look around you, look at the fields; already they are white, ready for harvest! Already the reaper is being paid his wages, already he is bringing in the grain for eternal life, so that sower and reaper can rejoice together. For here the proverb holds true: one sows,

another reaps; I sent you to reap a harvest you have not labored for. Others have labored for it; and you have come into the rewards of their labor.”

Many Samaritans of that town believed in Jesus on the strength of the woman’s words of testimony, “He told me everything I have done.” So, when the Samaritans came up to him, they begged him to stay with them. He stayed for two days, and many more came to believe on the strength of the words he spoke to them; and they said to the woman, “Now we believe no longer because of what you told us; we have heard him ourselves and we know that he is indeed the Savior of the world.” ❖

MARCH 26, 2017

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL 16:1-13

The LORD said to Samuel, ‘How much longer do you mean to go on mourning over Saul, now that I myself have rejected him as ruler of Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have found myself a king from among his sons.’

Samuel replied, ‘How can I go? When Saul hears of it he will kill me.’ The LORD then said, ‘Take a heifer with you and say, “I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.” Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I shall reveal to you what you must do; and you will anoint for me the one I indicate to you.’ Samuel did what the LORD ordered and went to Bethlehem. The elders of the town came trembling to meet him and asked, ‘Seer, is your coming favorable for us,’ ‘Yes,’ he replied. ‘I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Purify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.’ He purified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. When they arrived, he looked at Eliab and thought, ‘This must be the LORD’s anointed now before him,’ but the LORD said to Samuel, ‘Take no notice of his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him; God does not see as

human beings see; they look at appearances but the LORD looks at the heart.’ Jesse then called Abinadab and presented him to Samuel, who said, ‘The LORD has not chosen this one either.’ Jesse then presented Shammah, but Samuel said, ‘The LORD has not chosen this one either.’ Jesse thus presented seven of his sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, ‘The LORD has not chosen these.’ He then asked Jesse, ‘Are these all the sons you have?’ Jesse replied, ‘There is still one left, the youngest; he is looking after the sheep.’ Samuel then said to Jesse, ‘Send for him, for we shall not sit down to eat until he arrives.’ Jesse had him sent for; he had ruddy cheeks, with fine eyes and an attractive appearance. The LORD said, ‘Get up and anoint him: he is the one!’ At this, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him, surrounded by his brothers; and the spirit of the LORD seized on David from that day onwards. Samuel, for his part, set off and went to Ramah. ❖

MARCH 26, 2017

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE EPHESIANS 5:8-14

You were darkness once, but now you are light in the Lord; behave as children of light, for the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and uprightness and truth. Try to discover what the Lord wants of you, take no part in the futile works of darkness but, on the contrary, show them up for what they are. The things which are done in secret are shameful even to speak of; but anything shown up by the light will be illuminated and anything illuminated is itself a light. That is why it is said: Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you. ❖

MARCH 26, 2017

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO JOHN 9:1-41**

As he went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. His disciples asked him, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he should have been born blind?’ ‘Neither he nor his parents sinned,’ Jesus answered, ‘he was born blind so that the works of God might be revealed in him. As long as day lasts we must carry out the work of the one who sent me; the night will soon be here when no one can work. As long as I am in the world I am the light of the world.’

Having said this, he spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man, and said to him, ‘Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam’ (the name means ‘one who has been sent’). So he went off and washed and came back able to see.

His neighbors and the people who used to see him before (for he was a beggar) said, ‘Isn’t this the man who used to sit and beg?’ Some said, ‘Yes, it is the same one.’ Others said, ‘No, but he looks just like him.’ The man himself said, ‘Yes, I am the one.’ So they said

to him, 'Then how is it that your eyes were opened?' He answered, 'The man called Jesus made a paste, daubed my eyes with it and said to me, "Go off and wash at Siloam"; so I went, and when I washed I gained my sight.' They asked, 'Where is he?' He answered, 'I don't know.'

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. It had been a Sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he had gained his sight, he said, 'He put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see.' Then some of the Pharisees said, 'That man cannot be from God: he does not keep the Sabbath.' Others said, 'How can a sinner produce signs like this?' And there was division among them. So they spoke to the blind man again, 'What have you to say about him yourself, now that he has opened your eyes?' The man answered, 'He is a prophet.'

However, they would not believe that the man had been blind without first sending for the parents of the man who had gained his sight and asking them, 'Is this man really the son of yours who you say was born blind? If so, how is it that he is now able to see?' His parents answered, 'We know he is our son and we know he was

born blind, but how he can see, we don't know, nor who opened his eyes. Ask him. He is old enough: let him speak for himself.' His parents spoke like this out of fear of the leaders, who had already agreed to ban from the synagogue anyone who should acknowledge Jesus as the Christ. This was why his parents said, 'He is old enough; ask him.'

So they sent for the man again and said to him, 'Give glory to God! We are satisfied that this man is a sinner.' The man answered, 'Whether he is a sinner I don't know; all I know is that I was blind and now I can see.' They said to him, 'What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?' He replied, 'I have told you once and you wouldn't listen. Why do you want to hear it all again? Do you want to become his disciples yourselves?' At this they hurled abuse at him, 'It is you who are his disciple, we are disciples of Moses: we know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this man, we don't know where he comes from.' The man replied, 'That is just what is so amazing! You don't know where he comes from and he has opened my eyes! We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but God does listen to people who are devout and do his will. Ever since the world began it is unheard of for anyone to open the

eyes of someone born blind; if this man were not from God, he wouldn't have been able to do anything.' They retorted, 'Are you trying to teach us, and you a sinner through and through ever since you were born!' And they ejected him.

Jesus heard they had ejected him, and when he found him he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of man?' 'Sir,' the man replied, 'tell me who he is so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You have seen him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe,' and worshipped him.

Jesus said: It is for judgment that I have come into this world, so that those without sight may see and those with sight may become blind.

Hearing this, some Pharisees who were present said to him, 'So we are blind, are we?' Jesus replied: If you were blind, you would not be guilty, but since you say, 'We can see,' your guilt remains. ❖

APRIL 2, 2017

THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

THE PROPHET EZEKIEL 37:1-14

[pronunciation: prophesy = prah-fuh-sigh]

The hand of the LORD was on me; I was carried away by the spirit of the LORD, who set me down in the middle of the valley, a valley full of bones. The LORD made me walk up and down and all around among them. There were vast quantities of these bones on the floor of the valley; and they were completely dry. The LORD said to me, “O mortal, can these bones live?” I said, “You know, Lord.” God said, “Prophesy over these bones. Say, ‘Dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. The LORD says this to these bones: I am now going to make breath enter you, and you will live. I shall put sinews on you, I shall make flesh grow on you, I shall cover you with skin and give you breath, and you will live; and you will know that I am the LORD.’”

I prophesied as I had been ordered. While I was prophesying, there was a noise, a clattering sound; it was the bones coming together. And as I looked, they were covered with sinews; flesh was growing on them

and skin was covering them, yet there was no breath in them. The LORD said to me, “Prophecy to the breath; prophecy, O mortal. Say to the breath, ‘The LORD says this: Come from the four winds, breath; breathe on these dead, so that they come to life!’”

I prophesied as the LORD had ordered me, and the breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet, a great, an immense army. Then the LORD said,

“O mortal, these bones are the whole House of Israel. They keep saying, ‘Our bones are dry, our hope has gone; we are done for.’ So, prophecy. Say to them, ‘The LORD says this: I am now going to open your graves;

I shall raise you from your graves, my people, and lead you back to the soil of Israel. And you will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and raise you from your graves, my people, and put my spirit in you, and you revive, and I resettle you on your own soil.

Then you will know that I, the LORD, have spoken and done this, declares the LORD.’” ❖

APRIL 2, 2017

THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS 8:6-11

Human nature has nothing to look forward to but death, while the Spirit looks forward to life and peace, because the outlook of disordered human nature is opposed to God, since it does not submit to God's Law, and indeed it cannot, and those who live by their natural inclinations can never be pleasing to God. You, however, live not by your natural inclinations, but by the Spirit, since the Spirit of God has made a home in you. Indeed, anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But when Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin but the spirit is alive because you have been justified; and if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead has made a home in you, then that One who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your own mortal bodies through the Spirit living in you. ❖

APRIL 2, 2017

THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO JOHN 11:1-45**

There was a person named Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister, Martha, and he was ill.

It was the same Mary, the sister of the sick Lazarus, who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair. The sisters sent this message to Jesus, “Lord, the one you love is ill.” On receiving the message, Jesus said, “This sickness will not end in death, but it is for God’s glory so that through it the Son of God may be glorified.”

Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, yet when he heard that Lazarus was ill he stayed where he was for two more days before saying to the disciples, “Let us go back to Judea.” The disciples said, “Rabbi, it is not long since the Judeans were trying to stone you; are you going back there again?” Jesus replied: “Are there not twelve hours in the day? No one who walks in the daytime stumbles, having the light of this world to see by; anyone who walks around at night stumbles, having no light as a guide.” He said that and then

added, "Our friend Lazarus is at rest; I am going to wake him." The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he is at rest he will be saved." Jesus was speaking of the death of Lazarus, but they thought that by "rest" he meant "sleep"; so Jesus put it plainly, "Lazarus is dead; and for your sake I am glad I was not there because now you will believe. But let us go to him." Then Thomas (known as the Twin) said to the other disciples, "Let us also go to die with him."

On arriving, Jesus found that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days already. Bethany is only about two miles from Jerusalem, and many from the city had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming she went to meet him. Mary remained sitting in the house. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died, but even now I know that God will grant whatever you ask of him." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said, "I know he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said: "I am the resurrection. Anyone who believes in me, even though that person dies, will live, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" "Yes, Lord," she said, "I believe that

you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into this world.”

When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in a low voice, “The Master is here and wants to see you.” Hearing this, Mary got up quickly and went to him. Jesus had not yet come into the village; he was still at the place where Martha had met him. When the neighbors who were in the house comforting Mary saw her get up so quickly and go out, they followed her, thinking that she was going to the tomb to weep there. Mary went to Jesus, and as soon as she saw him she threw herself at his feet, saying, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”

At the sight of her tears, and those of the neighbors who had come with her, Jesus was greatly distressed, and with a profound sigh he said, “Where have you put him?” They said, “Lord, come and see.” Jesus wept; and the people said, “See how much he loved him!” But there were some who remarked, “He opened the eyes of the blind man. Could he not have prevented this one’s death?” Sighing again, Jesus reached the tomb: it was a cave with a stone to close the opening. Jesus said, “Take the stone away.” Martha, the dead man’s sister, said to him, “Lord, by now he will smell; this is the

fourth day since he died.” Jesus replied, “Have I not told you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?” So they took the stone away.

Then Jesus lifted up his eyes and said: “Father, I thank you for hearing my prayer. I myself knew that you hear me always, but I speak for the sake of all these who are standing around me, so that they may believe it was you who sent me.” When he had said this, he cried in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” The dead man came out, his feet and hands bound with strips of material, and a cloth over his face. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go free.” ❖

Holy Week and Easter Readings are in another book

APRIL 23, 2017

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 2:14A, 22-32

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven and addressed them in a loud voice:

“Men of Judea, and all you who live in Jerusalem, make no mistake about this, but listen carefully to what I say.

“Jesus the Nazarene was a man commended to you by God by the miracles and portents and signs that God worked through him when he was among you, as you know. This man, who was put into your power by the deliberate intention and foreknowledge of God, you took and had crucified and killed by men outside the Law. But God raised him to life, freeing him from the pangs of Hades; for it was impossible for him to be held in its power since, as David says of him: I kept the Lord before my sight always, for with him at my right hand nothing can shake me.

So my heart rejoiced my tongue delighted; my body, too, will rest secure, for you will not abandon me to Hades or allow your holy one to see corruption. You have taught me the way of life, you will fill me with joy

in your presence. Brothers, no one can deny that the patriarch David himself is dead and buried: his tomb is still with us. But since he was a prophet, and knew that God had sworn him an oath to make one of his descendants succeed him on the throne, he spoke with foreknowledge about the resurrection of the Christ: he is the one who was not abandoned to Hades, and whose body did not see corruption. God raised this man Jesus to life, and of that we are all witnesses. ❖

APRIL 23, 2017

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE FIRST LETTER OF PETER 1:3-9

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and into a heritage that can never be spoilt or soiled and never fade away. It is reserved in heaven for you who are being kept safe by God's power through faith until the salvation which has been prepared is revealed at the final point of time. This is a great joy to you, even though for a short time yet you must bear all sorts of trials; so that the worth of your faith, more valuable than gold, which is perishable even if it has been tested by fire, may be proved—to your praise and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. You have not seen him, yet you love him; and still without seeing him you believe in him and so are already filled with a joy so glorious that it cannot be described; and you are sure of the goal of your faith, that is, the salvation of your souls. ❖

APRIL 23, 2017

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO JOHN 20:19 – 31**

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the religious authorities. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, “Peace be with you,” and, after saying this, he showed them his hands and his side.

The disciples were filled with joy at seeing the Lord, and he said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.”

After saying this he breathed on them and said: “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone’s sins, they are forgiven; if you retain anyone’s sins, they are retained.”

Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples said to him, “We have seen the Lord,” but he answered, “Unless I can see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes

they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe.”

Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. “Peace be with you,” he said. Then he spoke to Thomas, “Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Do not be unbelieving any more but believe.” Thomas replied, “My Lord and my God!”

Jesus said to him: “You believe because you can see me. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.”

There were many other signs that Jesus worked in the sight of the disciples, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name. ❖

APRIL 30, 2017

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 2:14A, 36 – 41

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven and addressed them in a loud voice: “For this reason the whole House of Israel can be certain that the Lord and Christ whom God has made is this Jesus whom you crucified.”

Hearing this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “What are we to do, brothers and sisters?”

“You must repent,” Peter answered, “and every one of you must be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise that was made is for you and your children, and for all those who are far away, for all those whom the Lord our God is calling to himself.”

He spoke to them for a long time using many other arguments, and he urged them, “Save yourselves from this perverse generation.” They accepted what he said and were baptized. That very day about three thousand were added to their number. ❖

APRIL 30, 2017

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE FIRST LETTER OF PETER 1:17 – 23

And if you address as Father him who judges without favoritism according to each individual's deeds, live out the time of your exile here in reverent awe. For you know that the price of your ransom from the futile way of life handed down from your ancestors was paid, not in anything perishable like silver or gold, but in precious blood as of a blameless and spotless lamb, Christ. He was marked out before the world was made, and was revealed at the final point of time for your sake. Through him you now have faith in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory for this very purpose—that your faith and hope should be in God. Since by your obedience to the truth you have purified yourselves so that you can experience the genuine love of brothers and sisters, love each other intensely from the heart; for your new birth was not from any perishable seed but from imperishable seed, the living and enduring Word of God. ❖

APRIL 30, 2017

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO LUKE 24:13 – 35**

Now that very same day, two of them were on their way to a village called Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking together about all that had happened. And it happened that as they were talking together and discussing it, Jesus himself came up and walked by their side; but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him. He said to them, “What are all these things that you are discussing as you walk along?”

They stopped, their faces downcast. Then one of them, called Cleopas, answered him, “You must be the only person staying in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have been happening there these last few days.”

He asked, “What things?” They answered, “All about Jesus of Nazareth, who showed himself a prophet powerful in action and speech before God and the whole people; and how our chief priests and our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and had him

crucified. Our own hope had been that he would be the one to set Israel free.

And this is not all: two whole days have now gone by since it all happened; and some women from our group have astounded us: they went to the tomb in the early morning, and when they could not find the body, they came back to tell us they had seen a vision of angels who declared he was alive. Some of our friends went to the tomb and found everything exactly as the women had reported, but of him they saw nothing.”

Then he said to them, “You foolish men! So slow to believe all that the prophets have said! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer before entering into his glory?” Then, starting with Moses and going through all the prophets, he explained to them the passages throughout the scriptures that were about himself. When they drew near to the village to which they were going, he made as if to go on; but they pressed him to stay with them saying, “It is nearly evening, and the day is almost over.” So he went in to stay with them. Now while he was with them at table, he took the bread and said the blessing; then he broke it and handed it to them.

And their eyes were opened and they recognized him; but he had vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?” They set out that instant and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven assembled together with their companions, who said to them, “The Lord has indeed risen and has appeared to Simon.” Then they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognized him at the breaking of bread.



MAY 7, 2017

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 2:42 – 47

Those who were newly baptized upon hearing Peter's preaching remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers. And everyone was filled with awe; the apostles worked many signs and miracles. And all who shared the faith owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and distributed the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed. Each day, with one heart, they regularly went to the Temple but met in their houses for the breaking of bread; they shared their food gladly and generously; they praised God and were looked up to by everyone. Day by day the Lord added to their community those who were being saved. ❖

MAY 7, 2017

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE FIRST LETTER OF PETER 2:19 – 25

There is merit if, in awareness of God, you put up with the pains of undeserved punishment; but what glory is there in putting up with a beating after you have done something wrong? The merit in the sight of God is in putting up with it patiently when you are punished for doing your duty. This, in fact, is what you were called to do, because Christ suffered for you and left an example for you to follow in his steps. He had done nothing wrong, and had spoken no deceit. He was insulted and did not retaliate with insults; when he was suffering he made no threats but put his trust in the upright judge. He was bearing our sins in his own body on the cross, so that we might die to our sins and live for uprightness; through his bruises you have been healed. You had gone astray like sheep but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls. ❖

MAY 7, 2017

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO JOHN 10:1 – 10**

Jesus said to the Pharisees, “In all truth I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold through the gate, but climbs in some other way, is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the flock; the gatekeeper lets him in, the sheep hear his voice, one by one he calls his own sheep and leads them out. When he has brought out all those that are his, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow because they know his voice. They will never follow a stranger, but will run away from him because they do not recognize the voice of strangers.” Jesus told them this parable but they failed to understand what he was saying to them. So Jesus spoke to them again: “In all truth I tell you, I am the gate of the sheepfold. All who have come before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep took no notice of them. I am the gate. Anyone who enters through me will be safe: such a one will go in and out and will find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full.” ❖

MAY 14, 2017

THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 7:55 – 60

But Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at God's right hand. "Look! I can see heaven thrown open," he said, "and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God." All the members of the council shouted out and stopped their ears with their hands; then they made a concerted rush at him, thrust him out of the city and stoned him.

The witnesses put down their clothes at the feet of a young man called Saul.

As they were stoning him, Stephen said in invocation, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Then he knelt down and said aloud, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them."

And with these words he died. ❖

MAY 14, 2017

THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE FIRST LETTER OF PETER 2:2 – 10

Like new-born babies all your longing should be for milk—the unadulterated spiritual milk—which will help you to grow up to salvation, at any rate if you have tasted that the Lord is good. He is the living stone, rejected by human beings but chosen by God and precious to him; set yourselves close to him so that you, too, may be living stones making a spiritual house as a holy priesthood to offer the spiritual sacrifices made acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. As scripture says: Now I am laying a stone in Zion, a chosen, precious cornerstone and no one who relies on this will be brought to disgrace. To you believers it brings honor. But for unbelievers, it is rather a stone which the builders rejected that became a cornerstone, a stumbling stone, a rock to trip people up. They stumble over it because they do not believe in the Word; it was the fate in store for them. But you are a chosen race, a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, a people to be a personal possession to sing the praises of God who called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were a non-people and now you are the People of God; once you were outside his pity; now you have received pity. ❖

MAY 14, 2017

THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO JOHN 14:1 – 14**

Do not let your hearts be troubled. You trust in God, trust also in me. In my Father's house there are many places to live in; otherwise I would have told you. I am going now to prepare a place for you, and after I have gone and prepared you a place, I shall return to take you to myself, so that you may be with me where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.

Thomas said, "Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" Jesus said: I am the Way; I am Truth and Life. No one can come to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father too. From this moment you know him and have seen him.

Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and then we shall be satisfied." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father, so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

“Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? What I say to you I do not speak of my own accord: it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his works. You must believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe it on the evidence of these works.

In all truth I tell you, whoever believes in me will perform the same works as I do myself, and will perform even greater works, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask in my name I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.” ❖

MAY 21, 2017

THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 17:22–31

Paul stood before the whole council of the Areopagus and made this speech: “People of Athens, I have seen for myself how extremely scrupulous you are in all religious matters, because, as I strolled round looking at your sacred monuments, I noticed among other things an altar inscribed: To An Unknown God. In fact, the unknown God you revere is the one I proclaim to you.

“Since the God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth, that One does not make a home in shrines made by human hands. Nor is God in need of anything, to be served by human hands; on the contrary, it is God who gives everything, including life and breath, to everyone. From one single principle God not only created the whole human race so that they could occupy the entire earth, but that One decreed the times and limits of their habitation.

And God did this so that humans might seek the deity and, by feeling their way, succeed in finding God; and indeed that One is not far from any of us, since it is in God that we live, and move, and exist, as indeed some

of your own writers have said: We are all God's children.

“Since we are the children of God, we have no excuse for thinking that the deity looks like anything in gold, silver or stone that has been carved and designed by a human. But now, overlooking the times of ignorance, God is telling everyone everywhere that they must repent, because a day has been fixed when the whole world will be judged in uprightness by a human God has appointed. And God has publicly proved this by raising him from the dead.” ❖

MAY 21, 2017

THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE FIRST LETTER OF PETER 3:13–22

No one can hurt you if you are determined to do only what is right; and blessed are you if you have to suffer for being upright. Have no dread of them; have no fear. Simply proclaim the Lord Christ holy in your hearts, and always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you have. But give it with courtesy and respect and with a clear conscience, so that those who slander your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their accusations. And if it is the will of God that you should suffer, it is better to suffer for doing right than for doing wrong.

Christ himself died once and for all for sins, the upright for the sake of the guilty, to lead us to God. In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life, and, in the spirit, he went to preach to the spirits in prison. They refused to believe long ago, while God patiently waited to receive them, in Noah's time when the ark was being built. In it only a few, that is eight souls, were saved through water. It is the baptism corresponding to this water which saves you now—not

the washing off of physical dirt, but the pledge of a good conscience given to God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has entered heaven and is at God's right hand, with angels, ruling forces and powers subject to him. ❖

MAY 21, 2017

THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO JOHN 14:15–21**

Jesus told the disciples, “If you love me you will keep my commandments. I shall ask the Father, who will give you another Paraclete to be with you for ever, the Spirit of truth whom the world can never accept since it neither sees nor knows her; but you know her, because she is with you, she is in you.

“I shall not leave you orphans; I shall come to you. In a short time the world will no longer see me; but you will see that I live and you also will live. On that day you will know that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you. Whoever holds to my commandments and keeps them is the one who loves me; and whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I shall love that one and reveal myself to that one.” ❖

MAY 28, 2017

THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 1:6–14

When the disciples came together with Jesus after his death and resurrection, they asked him, “Lord, has the time come for you to restore the kingdom to Israel?” He replied, “It is not for you to know times or dates that the Father has decided by his own authority, but you will receive the power of the Holy Spirit which will come on you, and then you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judea and Samaria, and indeed to earth’s remotest end.” As Jesus said this he was lifted up while they looked on, and a cloud took him from their sight.

They were still staring into the sky as he went, when suddenly two men in white were standing beside them, and they said, “Why are you Galileans standing here looking into the sky? This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven will come back in the same way as you have seen him go to heaven.” So from the Mount of Olives, as it is called, they went back to Jerusalem, a short distance away, no more than a Sabbath walk; and when they reached the city they went to the upper room

where they were staying; there were Peter and John, James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Jude son of James. With one heart all these joined constantly in prayer, together with some women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers. ❖

MAY 28, 2017

THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE FIRST LETTER OF PETER 4:12–14; 5:6–11

My dear friends, do not be taken aback at the testing by fire which is taking place among you, as though something strange were happening to you; but in so far as you share in the sufferings of Christ, be glad, so that you may enjoy a much greater gladness when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted for bearing Christ's name, blessed are you, for on you rests the Spirit of God, the Spirit of glory.

Bow down, then, before the power of God now, so that One may raise you up in due time; unload all your burden on to God, who is concerned about you. Keep sober and alert, because your enemy the devil is on the prowl like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Stand up to that one, strong in faith and in the knowledge that it is the same kind of suffering that the community of your brothers and sisters throughout the world is undergoing. You will have to suffer only for a little while: the God of all grace who called you to eternal glory in Christ will restore you, he will confirm, strengthen and support you. His power lasts forever and ever. Amen. ❖

MAY 28, 2017

THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO JOHN 17:1–11**

After he offered the disciples his final teaching at supper, Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come: glorify your Son so that your Son may glorify you; so that, just as you have given him power over all humanity, he may give eternal life to all those you have entrusted to him. And eternal life is this: to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I have glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. Now, Father, glorify me with that glory I had with you before ever the world existed.

“I have revealed your name to those whom you took from the world to give me. They were yours and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now at last they have recognized that all you have given me comes from you for I have given them the teaching you gave to me, and they have indeed accepted it and know for certain that I came from you, and have believed that it was you who sent me. It is for them that I pray. I am

not praying for the world but for those you have given me, because they belong to you. All I have is yours and all you have is mine, and in them I am glorified. I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep those you have given me true to your name, so that they may be one like us.” ❖

There are two options for the first reading on the Pentecost – ask the preacher which should be used.

JUNE 4, 2017

THE DAY OF PENTECOST: WHITSUNDAY

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS 11:24 – 30

(Option One)

[pronunciation: prophesy = prah-fuh-sigh]

Moses went out and told the people what the LORD had said. Then he collected seventy of the people's elders and stationed them round the Tent. The LORD descended in the cloud. He spoke to him and took some of the spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders. When the spirit came on them they prophesied—but only once.

Two men had stayed back in the camp; one was called Eldad and the other Medad. The spirit came down on them; though they had not gone to the Tent, their names were enrolled among the rest. These began to prophesy in the camp. A young man ran to tell Moses this.

'Look,' he said, 'Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.' Joshua son of Nun, who had served Moses since he was a boy, spoke up and said, 'My lord Moses, stop them!' Moses replied, 'Are you jealous on my account? If only all the LORD's people were prophets,

and the LORD had given them his spirit!’ Moses then went back to the camp with the elders of Israel. ❖

JUNE 4, 2017

THE DAY OF PENTECOST: WHITSUNDAY

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 2: 1-21

(Option Two)

[pronunciation: prophesy = prah-fuh-sigh]

When Pentecost day came round, the disciples had all met together, when suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of a violent wind which filled the entire house in which they were sitting; and there appeared to them tongues as of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak different languages as the Spirit gave them power to express themselves.

Now there were devout people living in Jerusalem from every nation under heaven, and at this sound they all assembled, and each one was bewildered to hear these speaking their own language. They were amazed and astonished. “Surely,” they said, “All these speaking are Galileans? How does it happen that each of us hears them in their own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; people from Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya round Cyrene; residents of

Rome—Israelites and proselytes alike—Cretans and Arabs, we hear them preaching in our own language about the marvels of God.” Everyone was amazed and perplexed; they asked one another what it all meant.

Some, however, laughed it off. “They have been drinking too much new wine,” they said. Then Peter stood up with the Eleven and addressed them in a loud voice: “People of Judaea, and all you who live in Jerusalem, make no mistake about this, but listen carefully to what I say. These are not drunk, as you imagine; why, it is only the third hour of the day. On the contrary, this is what the prophet was saying: ‘In the last days, the Lord declares, I shall pour out my Spirit on all humanity. Your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your young people shall see visions, your old people dream dreams. Even on the slaves, men and women, shall I pour out my Spirit. I will show portents in the sky above and signs on the earth below. The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the day of the Lord comes, that great and terrible Day. And all who call on the name of the Lord will be saved.’” ❖

JUNE 4, 2017

THE DAY OF PENTECOST: WHITSUNDAY

PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS 12:3B-13

Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says 'Let Jesus be cursed!' and no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit.

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses. For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Israelites or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. ❖

*There are two options for the Gospel reading
on the Day of Pentecost – ask the preacher
which should be used*

JUNE 4, 2017

THE DAY OF PENTECOST: WHITSUNDAY

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO JOHN 20:19-23

(Option One)

In the evening of the same day that Mary Magdalene saw Jesus at the tomb, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the religious authorities.

Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, “Peace be with you,” and, after saying this, he showed them his hands and his side.

The disciples were filled with joy at seeing the Lord, and he said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.”

After saying this he breathed on them and said:
“Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone’s sins, they are forgiven; if you retain anyone’s sins, they are retained.” ❖

JUNE 4, 2017

THE DAY OF PENTECOST: WHITSUNDAY

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO JOHN 7:37-39**

(Option Two)

On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, ‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, “Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.” Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified. ❖

JUNE 11, 2017

TRINITY SUNDAY

THE BOOK OF GENESIS 1:1 –2:4A

In the beginning God created heaven and earth. Now the earth was a formless void, and there was darkness over the deep, with a divine wind sweeping over the waters. God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. God saw that light was good, and he divided light from darkness. God called light “day,” and darkness “night.” Evening came and morning came: the first day.

God said, “Let there be a vault through the middle of the waters to divide the waters in two.” And so it was. She made the vault, and it divided the waters under the vault from the waters above the vault. God called the vault “heaven.” Evening came and morning came: the second day.

God said, “Let the waters under heaven come together into a single mass, and let dry land appear.” And so it was. God called the dry land “earth” and the mass of waters “seas,” and he saw that it was good. God said, “Let the earth produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants, and fruit trees on earth, bearing fruit with their seed inside, each corresponding to its own species.”

And so it was. The earth produced vegetation: the various kinds of seed-bearing plants and the fruit trees with seed inside, each corresponding to its own species. God saw that it was good. Evening came and morning came: the third day.

God said, “Let there be lights in the vault of heaven to divide day from night, and let them indicate festivals, days and years. Let them be lights in the vault of heaven to shine on the earth.” And so it was. God made the two great lights: the greater light to govern the day, the smaller light to govern the night, and the stars. She set them in the vault of heaven to shine on the earth, to govern the day and the night and to divide light from darkness. God saw that it was good. Evening came and morning came: the fourth day.

God said, “Let the waters be alive with a swarm of living creatures, and let birds wing their way above the earth across the vault of heaven.” And so it was. God created great sea-monsters and all the creatures that glide and teem in the waters in their own species, and winged birds in their own species. God saw that it was good. He blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the waters of the seas; and let the birds multiply

on land.” Evening came and morning came: the fifth day.

God said, “Let the earth produce every kind of living creature in its own species: cattle, creeping things and wild animals of all kinds.” And so it was. God made wild animals in their own species, and cattle in theirs, and every creature that crawls along the earth in its own species. God saw that it was good. She said, “Let us make humans in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves, and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the wild animals and all the creatures that creep along the ground.” God created humans in her own image, in the image of God they were created, male and female she created them. God blessed them, saying to them, “Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and subdue it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all the living creatures that move on earth.”

God also said, “Look, to you I give all the seed-bearing plants everywhere on the surface of the earth, and all the trees with seed-bearing fruit; this will be your food. And to all the wild animals, all the birds of heaven and all the living creatures that creep along the ground, I give all the foliage of the plants as their food.” And so

it was. He saw all that had been made, and indeed it was very good. Evening came and morning came: the sixth day.

Thus heaven and earth were completed with all their array. On the seventh day God had completed the work she had been doing. God rested on the seventh day after all the work that had been done. Such was the story of heaven and earth as they were created. ❖

JUNE 11, 2017

TRINITY SUNDAY

PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS 13:11 – 13

Brothers and sisters, we wish you joy. Try to grow perfect, encourage one another, have a common mind and live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with the holy kiss. All God's holy people send you their greetings. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. ❖

JUNE 11, 2017

TRINITY SUNDAY

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 28:16 – 20**

The eleven disciples set out for Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them after his resurrection. When they saw him they fell down before him, though some hesitated. Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And look, I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.” ❖

JUNE 18, 2017

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 6

THE BOOK OF GENESIS 18:1-15, (21:1-7)

The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. He said, “My lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant. Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant.” So they said, “Do as you have said.” And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, “Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes.” Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

They said to him, “Where is your wife Sarah?” And he said, “There, in the tent.” Then one said, “I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son.” And Sarah was listening at the tent entrance behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?” The Lord said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh, and say, ‘Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?’ Is anything too wonderful for the Lord? At the set time I will return to you, in due season, and Sarah shall have a son.” But Sarah denied, saying, “I did not laugh”; for she was afraid. He said, “Oh yes, you did laugh.”

Ask preacher whether or not to use the section below.

[The Lord dealt with Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did for Sarah as he had promised. Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the time of which God had spoken to him. Abraham gave the name Isaac to his son whom Sarah bore him. And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. Now

Sarah said, “God has brought laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me.” And she said, “Who would ever have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.”] ❖

JUNE 18, 2017

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 6

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS 5:1-8

Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person-- though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. ❖

JUNE 18, 2017

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 6

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 9:35-10:8(9-23)**

Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go, proclaim the good news, ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’ Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment.

Ask preacher whether or not to use the section below.

[Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for laborers deserve their food. Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave. As you enter the house, greet it. If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

“See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.

Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles. When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly I tell you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.”]



JUNE 25, 2017

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 7

THE BOOK OF GENESIS 21:8-21

The child grew, and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, playing with her son Isaac. So she said to Abraham, "Cast out this slave woman with her son; for the son of this slave woman shall not inherit along with my son Isaac." The matter was very distressing to Abraham on account of his son. But God said to Abraham, "Do not be distressed because of the boy and because of your slave woman; whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for it is through Isaac that offspring shall be named for you. As for the son of the slave woman, I will make a nation of him also, because he is your offspring." So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered about in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

When the water in the skin was gone, she cast the child under one of the bushes. Then she went and sat down opposite him a good way off, about the distance of a bowshot; for she said, "Do not let me look on the death of the child." And as she sat opposite him, she lifted up her voice and wept. And God heard the voice of the boy; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, "What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid; for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is. Come, lift up the boy and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make a great nation of him." Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. She went, and filled the skin with water, and gave the boy a drink.

God was with the boy, and he grew up; he lived in the wilderness, and became an expert with the bow. He lived in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother got a wife for him from the land of Egypt. ❖

JUNE 25, 2017

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – PROPER 7

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS 6:1B-11

Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. ❖

JUNE 25, 2017

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 7

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 10:24-39**

Jesus said to the twelve disciples,

"A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

"So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

"Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

"Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

"For I have come to set a man against his father,
and a daughter against her mother,
and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;
and one's foes will be members of one's own household.

"Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it." ❖

JULY 2, 2017

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 8

THE BOOK OF GENESIS 22:1–14

It happened one time that God put Abraham to the test. “Abraham, Abraham!” God called. “Here I am,” Abraham replied. God said, “Take your son, your only son, your beloved Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, where you are to offer him as a burnt offering on one of the mountains which I shall point out to you.”

Early next morning Abraham saddled his donkey and took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. He chopped wood for the burnt offering and started on his journey to the place which God had indicated to him. On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. Then Abraham said to his servants, “Stay here with the donkey. The boy and I are going over there; we shall worship and then come back to you.” Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering, loaded it on Isaac, and carried in his own hands the fire and the knife. Then the two of them set out together.

Isaac spoke to his father Abraham. “Father?” he said. “Yes, my son,” Abraham replied. “Look,” the boy said, “here are the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?” Abraham replied, “My son, God will provide the lamb for the burnt offering.” And the two of them went on together. When they arrived at the place which God had indicated to him, Abraham built an altar there, and arranged the wood. Then he bound his son and put him on the altar on top of the wood. Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to kill his son.

But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven. “Abraham, Abraham!” the angel said. “Here I am,” Abraham replied. “Do not raise your hand against the boy,” the angel said. “Do not harm him, for now I know you fear God. You have not refused me your own beloved son.” Then looking up, Abraham saw a ram caught by its horns in a bush. Abraham took the ram and offered it as a burnt offering in place of his son. Abraham called this place “The LORD provides,” and hence the saying today: “On the mountain the LORD provides.” ❖

JULY 2, 2017

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 8

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS 6:12–23

You must not allow sin to reign over your mortal bodies and make you obey their desires; or give any parts of your bodies over to sin to be used as instruments of evil. Instead, give yourselves to God, as people brought to life from the dead, and give every part of your bodies to God to be instruments of uprightness; and then sin will no longer have any power over you: you are living not under law, but under grace. What is the implication? That we are free to sin, now that we are not under law but under grace? Out of the question! You know well that if you undertake to be somebody's slave and obey him, you are the slave of him you obey: you can be the slave either of sin which leads to death, or of obedience which leads to saving justice. Once you were slaves of sin, but thank God you have given wholehearted obedience to the pattern of teaching to which you were introduced; and so, being freed from serving sin, you took uprightness as your master.

I am putting it in human terms because you are still weak human beings: as once you surrendered yourselves as servants to immorality and to a lawlessness which results in more lawlessness, now you have to surrender yourselves to uprightness which is to result in sanctification. When you were the servants of sin, you felt no obligation to uprightness, and what did you gain from living like that? Experiences of which you are now ashamed, for that sort of behavior ends in death. But, now you are set free from sin and bound to the service of God, your gain will be sanctification and the end will be eternal life. For the wage paid by sin is death; the gift freely given by God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. ❖

JULY 2, 2017

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 8

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 10:40–42

Jesus said to the disciples, “Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me; and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Anyone who welcomes a prophet because she is a prophet will have a prophet’s reward; and anyone who welcomes an upright person because he is upright will have the reward of an upright person.

If anyone gives so much as a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because she is a disciple, then in truth I tell you, that one will most certainly not go without his reward.” ❖

JULY 9, 2017

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 9

THE BOOK OF GENESIS 24:34–38; 42–49, 58–67

Abraham's servant said to Laban and Bethuel, Rebekah's brother and father, "I am Abraham's servant. The LORD has loaded my master with blessings, and Abraham is now very rich. He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, men and women slaves, camels and donkeys. Sarah, my master's wife, bore my master a son in his old age, and he has made over all his property to him. My master made me take this oath, 'You are not to choose a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites in whose country I live. Instead, you are to go to my father's home and to my own kinsfolk to choose a wife for my son.' Arriving today at the spring I said, 'The LORD, God of my master Abraham, please grant a successful outcome to the course I propose to take. While I stand by the spring, if a girl comes out to draw water and I say to her, "Please give me a little water to drink from your pitcher," if she replies, "Drink by all means, and I shall draw water for your camels too," let her be the girl whom the LORD has decreed for my master's son.'

“I was still saying this in my mind when Rebekah came out, her pitcher on her shoulder. She came down to the spring and drew water. I said to her, “Please give me a drink.” Quickly she lowered her pitcher saying, “Drink, and I shall water your camels too.” I asked her, “Whose daughter are you?” She replied, “I am the daughter of Bethuel, whom Milcah bore to Nahor.” Then I put this ring through her nose and these bracelets on her arms. I bowed down and worshipped the LORD, and I blessed the LORD, God of my master Abraham, who had led me by a direct path to choose the daughter of my master’s brother for his son. Now tell me whether you are prepared to show constant and faithful love to my master; if not, say so, and I shall know what to do.”

They called Rebekah and asked her, “Will you go with this man?” She replied, “I will.” Accordingly they let their sister Rebekah go, with her nurse, and Abraham’s servant and his men. They blessed Rebekah and said to her: “Sister of ours, from you may there spring thousands and tens of thousands! May your descendants gain possession of the gates of their enemies!” And forthwith, Rebekah and her maids mounted the camels, and followed the man. The servant took Rebekah and departed.

Isaac meanwhile had come back from the well of Lahai Roi and was living in the Negev. While Isaac was out walking towards evening in the fields, he looked up and saw camels approaching. And Rebekah looked up and saw Isaac. She jumped down from her camel, and asked the servant, “Who is that man walking through the fields towards us?” The servant replied, “That is my master.”

So she took her veil and covered herself up. The servant told Isaac the whole story. Then Isaac took her into his tent. He married Rebekah and made her his wife. And in his love for her, Isaac was consoled for the loss of his mother. ❖

JULY 9, 2017

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 9

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS 7:15–25A

I do not understand my own behavior; I do not act as I mean to, but I do things that I hate. While I am acting as I do not want to, I still acknowledge the Law as good, so it is not myself acting, but the sin which lives in me. I realize that I don't have what it takes to do good. I can will it, but I can't *do* it. I decide to do good, but I don't *really* do it; I decide not to do evil, but then I do it anyway.

But every time I do what I do not want to, then it is not myself acting, but sin making its home in me. So I find this rule: that for me, where I want to do nothing but good, evil is close by my side. In my inmost self I dearly love God's law, but I see that acting in me there is a different law which battles against the law in my mind. So I am brought to be a prisoner of that law of sin which lives in me. What a wretched being I am! Who will rescue me from this transient self that is doomed to death? God. Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. ❖

JULY 9, 2017

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 9

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 11:16–19, 25–30**

Jesus said to the crowds, “What comparison can I find for this generation? It is like children shouting to each other as they sit in the market place: “We played the pipes for you, and you wouldn’t dance; we sang dirges, and you wouldn’t be mourners.” For John came, neither eating nor drinking, and they say, “He is possessed.” The Son of man came, eating and drinking, and they say, “Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.” Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds.”

At that time Jesus exclaimed, “I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to little children. Yes, Father, for that is what it pleased you to do. Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, just as no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

“Come to me, all you who labor and are overburdened, and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Yes, my yoke is easy and my burden light.” ❖

JULY 16, 2017

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – PROPER 10

THE BOOK OF GENESIS 25:19 - 34

This is the story of Isaac son of Abraham. Abraham fathered Isaac. Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah the daughter of Bethuel the Aramaean of Paddan-Aram, and sister of Laban the Aramaean. Isaac prayed to the LORD on behalf of his wife, for she was barren. The LORD heard his prayer, and his wife Rebekah conceived. But the children inside her struggled so much that she said, “If this is the way of it, why go on living?” So she went to consult the LORD, and the LORD said to her: “There are two nations in your womb, your issue will be two rival peoples. One nation will have the mastery of the other, and the elder will serve the younger.”

When the time came for her confinement, there were indeed twins in her womb. The first to be born was red, altogether like a hairy cloak; so they named him Esau [a name which plays on the meaning of “red” and “hairy”]. Then his brother was born, with his hand grasping Esau’s heel; so they named him Jacob [which

means “he takes by the heel”]. Isaac was sixty years old at the time of their birth.

When the boys grew up Esau became a skilled hunter, a man of the open country. Jacob on the other hand was a quiet man, staying at home among the tents. Isaac preferred Esau, for he had a taste for wild game; but Rebekah preferred Jacob.

Once, when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau returned from the countryside exhausted. Esau said to Jacob, “Give me a mouthful of that red stuff there; I am exhausted” (hence the name given to him, Edom; that is, “Red”). Jacob said, “First, give me your birthright in exchange.” Esau said, “Here I am, at death’s door; what use is a birthright to me?” Then Jacob said, “First give me your oath.” Esau gave Jacob his oath and sold his birthright to him. Then Jacob gave him some bread and lentil stew; Esau ate, drank, got up and went away. That was all Esau cared about his birthright. ❖

JULY 16, 2017

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – PROPER 10

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS 8:1 - 11

Condemnation will never come to those who are in Christ Jesus, because the law of the Spirit which gives life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death. What the Law could not do because of the weakness of human nature, God did, sending his own Son in the same human nature as any sinner to be a sacrifice for sin, and condemning sin in that human nature. This was so that the Law's requirements might be fully satisfied in us as we direct our lives, not by our natural inclinations, but by the Spirit.

Those who are living by their natural inclinations have their minds on the things human nature desires; those who live in the Spirit have their minds on spiritual things. And human nature has nothing to look forward to but death, while the Spirit looks forward to life and peace, because the outlook of disordered human nature is opposed to God, since it does not submit to God's Law; and indeed it cannot, and those who live by their natural inclinations can never be pleasing to God.

You, however, live not by your natural inclinations, but by the Spirit, since the Spirit of God has made a home in you. Indeed, anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But when Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is alive because you have been justified; and if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead has made a home in you, then the One who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your own mortal bodies through the Spirit living in you. ❖

JULY 16, 2017

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 10

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 13:1–9; 18–23**

Jesus left the house and sat by the lakeside, but such large crowds gathered round him that he got into a boat and sat there. The people all stood on the shore, and he told them many things in parables. He said, “Listen, a sower went out to sow. As she sowed, some seeds fell on the edge of the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Others fell on patches of rock where they found little soil and sprang up at once, because there was no depth of earth; but as soon as the sun came up they were scorched and, not having any roots, they withered away. Others fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Others fell on rich soil and produced their crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Anyone who has ears should listen!

“So pay attention to the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom without understanding, the Evil One comes and carries off what was sown in his heart: this is the seed sown on the edge of the path.

The seed sown on patches of rock is someone who hears the word and welcomes it at once with joy. But such a person has no root deep down and does not last; should some trial come, or some persecution on account of the word, at once he falls away. The seed sown in thorns is someone who hears the word, but the worry of the world and the lure of riches choke the word and so it produces nothing. And the seed sown in rich soil is someone who hears the word and understands it; this is the one who yields a harvest and produces now a hundredfold, now sixty, now thirty.” ❖

JULY 23, 2017

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – PROPER 11

THE BOOK OF GENESIS 28:10 - 19A

Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Haran. When he had reached a certain place, he stopped there for the night, since the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of that place, he made it his pillow and lay down where he was. He had a dream: there was a ladder, planted on the ground with its top reaching to heaven; and God's angels were going up and down on it. And there was the LORD, standing beside him and saying, "I, the LORD, am the God of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac. The ground on which you are lying I shall give to you and your descendants. Your descendants will be as plentiful as the dust on the ground; you will spread out to west and east, to north and south, and all clans on earth will bless themselves by you and your descendants. Be sure, I am with you; I shall keep you safe wherever you go, and bring you back to this country, for I shall never desert you until I have done what I have promised you."

Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Truly, the LORD is in this place and I did not know!" He was

afraid and said, “How awe-inspiring this place is! This is nothing less than the abode of God, and this is the gate of heaven!” Early next morning, Jacob took the stone he had used for his pillow, and set it up as a pillar, pouring oil over the top of it. He named the place Bethel, [which means “The House of God]. ❖

JULY 23, 2017

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – PROPER 11

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS 8:12 - 25

My brothers and sisters, we have no obligation to human nature to be dominated by it. If you do live in that way, you are doomed to die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the habits originating in the body, you will have life. All who are guided by the Spirit of God are sons of God; for what you received was not the spirit of slavery to bring you back into fear; you received the Spirit of adoption, enabling us to cry out, “Abba, Father!” The Spirit itself joins with our spirit to bear witness that we are children of God. And if we are children, then we are heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, provided that we share his suffering, so as to share his glory.

In my estimation, all that we suffer in the present time is nothing in comparison with the glory which is destined to be disclosed for us, for the whole creation is waiting with eagerness for the children of God to be revealed.

It was not for its own purposes that creation had frustration imposed on it, but for the purposes of the

One who imposed it, with the intention that the whole creation itself might be freed from its slavery to corruption and brought into the same glorious freedom as the children of God. We are well aware that the whole creation, until this time, has been groaning in labor pains. And not only that: we too, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we are groaning inside ourselves, waiting with eagerness for our bodies to be set free. In hope, we already have salvation; in hope, not visibly present, or we should not be hoping (nobody goes on hoping for something which is already visible). But having this hope for what we cannot yet see, we are able to wait for it with persevering confidence. ❖

JULY 23, 2017

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 11

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 13:24 - 30, 36 - 43**

Jesus put another parable before the disciples: “The kingdom of Heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. While everybody was asleep his enemy came, sowed darnel all among the wheat, and made off. When the new wheat sprouted and ripened, then the darnel appeared as well. The owner’s laborers went to him and said, ‘Sir, was it not good seed that you sowed in your field? If so, where does the darnel come from?’ He said to them, ‘Some enemy has done this.’ And the laborers said, ‘Do you want us to go and weed it out?’ But he said, ‘No, because when you weed out the darnel you might pull up the wheat with it. Let them both grow till the harvest; and at harvest time I shall say to the reapers: First collect the darnel and tie it in bundles to be burnt, then gather the wheat into my barn.’”

Then, leaving the crowds, Jesus went to the house; and his disciples came to him and said, “Explain to us the parable about the darnel in the field.” He said in reply,

“The sower of the good seed is the Son of man. The field is the world; the good seed is the subjects of the kingdom; the darnel, the subjects of the Evil One; the enemy who sowed it, the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; the reapers are the angels. Well then, just as the darnel is gathered up and burnt in the fire, so it will be at the end of time. The Son of man will send his angels and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of falling and all who do evil, and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth. Then the upright will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Anyone who has ears should listen!” ❖

JULY 30, 2017

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – PROPER 12

THE BOOK OF GENESIS 29:15 – 18

Laban said to his nephew Jacob, “Just because you are my kinsman, why should you work for me for nothing? Tell me what wages you want.” Now Laban had two daughters, the elder named Leah, and the younger Rachel. Leah had lovely eyes, but Rachel was shapely and beautiful, and Jacob had fallen in love with Rachel. So his answer was, “I shall work for you for seven years in exchange for your younger daughter Rachel.” Laban replied, “It is better for me to give her to you than to a stranger; stay with me.” So Jacob worked for seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him like a few days because he loved her so much.

Then Jacob said to Laban, “Give me my wife, for my time is up and I should like to go to her.” Laban gathered all the people of the place together, and gave a banquet. But when night came, he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and he slept with her. (Laban gave his slave-girl Zilpah to his daughter Leah as her slave.) When morning came, it was Leah! So Jacob said to Laban, “What have you done to me? Did I

not work for you for Rachel? Why then have you tricked me?” Laban replied, “It is not the custom in our place to marry off the younger before the elder? Finish this marriage week and I shall give you the other one too in return for your working for me for another seven years.” Jacob agreed and, when he had finished the week, Laban gave him his daughter Rachel as his wife.



JULY 30, 2017

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 12

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS 8:26 — 39

The Spirit comes to help us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit pleads for us in groans that cannot be put into words. And God, who can see into all hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's holy people according to the will of God. We are well aware that all things work together for good for those who love God—those who have been called in accordance with the divine purpose. God decided beforehand who were the ones destined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that Christ should be the firstborn of many brothers and sisters. It was those so destined that God called. Those that were called were justified; and those that were justified, God also glorified.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? Since God did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for the sake of all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who

will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn?

It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Can hardships or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As scripture says: For your sake we are being put to death all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. ❖

JULY 30, 2017

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 12

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 13:31 - 33, 44 - 52**

Jesus put another parable before the disciples, “The kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the biggest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air can come and shelter in its branches.” He told them another parable, “The kingdom of Heaven is like the yeast a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour till it was leavened all through.”

“The kingdom of Heaven is like treasure hidden in a field which someone has found; he hides it again, goes off in his joy, sells everything he owns and buys the field. Again, the kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls; when he finds one of great value he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it.

“Again, the kingdom of Heaven is like a dragnet that is cast in the sea and brings in a haul of all kinds of fish. When it is full, the fishermen bring it ashore; then, sitting down, they collect the good ones in baskets and

throw away those that are no use. This is how it will be at the end of time: the angels will appear and separate the wicked from the upright, to throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.

“Have you understood all these?” They said, “Yes.” And he said to them, “Well then, every scribe who becomes a disciple of the kingdom of Heaven is like a householder who brings out from his storeroom new things as well as old.” ❖

AUGUST 6, 2017

TRANSFIGURATION

THE BOOK OF EXODUS 34:29-35

Moses came down from Mount Sinai. As he came down from the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant in his hand, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God.

When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, the skin of his face was shining, and they were afraid to come near him. But Moses called to them; and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses spoke with them. Afterward all the Israelites came near, and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face; but whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he would take the veil off, until he came out; and when he came out, and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, the Israelites would see the face of Moses, that the skin of his face was shining; and Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with him. ❖

AUGUST 6, 2017

TRANSFIGURATION

THE SECOND LETTER OF PETER 1:13-21

I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to refresh your memory, since I know that my death will come soon, as indeed our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things. For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received honor and glory from God the Father when that voice was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory, saying, “This is my Son, my Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.” We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven, while we were with him on the holy mountain.

So we have the prophetic message more fully confirmed. You will do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. ❖

AUGUST 6, 2017

TRANSFIGURATION

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO LUKE 9:28-36**

Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah” —not knowing what he said. While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, “This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!” When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen. ❖

AUGUST 13, 2017

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 14

THE BOOK OF GENESIS 37:1–4, 12–28

This is the story of Joseph, one of Jacob's sons. Joseph was seventeen years old. As he was young, he was shepherding the flock with his brothers, the sons of his father's wives Bilhah and Zilpah; and Joseph brought his father bad reports about them. Jacob loved Joseph more than all his other sons, for he was the son of his old age, and he had a decorated tunic made for him. But his brothers, seeing how much more his father loved him than all his other sons, came to hate him so much that they could not say a civil word to him.

His brothers went to pasture their father's flock at Shechem. Then Israel said to Joseph, "Your brothers are with the flock at Shechem, aren't they? Come, I am going to send you to them." "I am ready," Joseph replied. Israel said to him, "Go and see how your brothers and the flock are doing, and bring me word." He sent Joseph from the valley of Hebron, and he arrived at Shechem. A man found him wandering in the countryside and asked him, "What are you looking for?"

“I am looking for my brothers,” Joseph replied. “Please tell me where they are pasturing their flock.” The man answered, “They have moved on from here; indeed I heard them say, ‘Let us go to Dothan.’” So Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan.

They saw him in the distance, and before he reached them they made a plot to kill him. “Here comes that dreamer,” they said to one another. “Come on, let us kill him now and throw him down one of the storage wells; we can say that some wild animal has devoured him. Then we shall see what becomes of his dreams.” But one of the brothers, Reuben, heard, and he saved him from their clutches. “We must not take his life,” he said. “Shed no blood,” said Reuben to them. “Throw him down that well out in the desert, but do not kill him yourselves” (intending to save him from them and to restore him to his father).

So, when Joseph reached his brothers, they pulled off his tunic, the decorated tunic which he was wearing, and catching hold of him, threw him into the well. The well was empty, with no water in it. They then sat down to eat. Looking up, they saw a group of Ishmaelites who were coming from Gilead, their camels laden with gum tragacanth, balsam and resin, which they were taking to

Egypt. Then Judah said to his brothers, “What do we gain by killing our brother and covering up his blood?

Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, then we shall not have laid hands on him ourselves. After all, he is our brother, and our own flesh.” His brothers agreed.

Now some Midianite merchants were passing, and they pulled Joseph out of the well. They sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver, and these men took Joseph to Egypt. ❖

AUGUST 13, 2017

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 14

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS 10:5–15

Moses writes of the saving justice that comes by the Law and says that whoever complies with it will find life in it. But the saving justice of faith says this: Do not think in your heart, “Who will go up to heaven?” (that is, to bring Christ down), or “Who will go down to the depths?” (that is, to bring Christ back from the dead). What does it say, then? The word is very near to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart; that is, the word of faith, the faith which we preach—that if you declare with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and if you believe with your heart that God raised him from the dead—then you will be saved. It is by believing with the heart that you are justified, and by making the declaration with your lips that you are saved.

When scripture says: No one who relies on this will be brought to disgrace, it makes no distinction between Israelites and Greek—the same Lord is the Lord of all, and his generosity is offered to all who appeal to him, for all who call on the name of the Lord will be saved.

How then are they to call on him if they have not come to believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard of him? And how will they hear of him unless there is a preacher for them? And how will there be preachers if they are not sent? As scripture says: How beautiful are the feet of the messenger of good news. ❖

AUGUST 13, 2017

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 14

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 14:22 - 33**

Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side while he sent the crowds away. After sending the crowds away he went up into the hills by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, while the boat, by now some furlongs from land, was hard pressed by rough waves, for there was a headwind. In the fourth watch of the night he came towards them, walking on the sea, and when the disciples saw him walking on the sea they were terrified. “It is a ghost,” they said, and cried out in fear. But at once Jesus called out to them, saying, “Courage! It’s me! Don’t be afraid.” It was Peter who answered. “Lord,” he said, “if it is you, tell me to come to you across the water.” Jesus said, “Come.” Then Peter got out of the boat and started walking towards Jesus across the water, but then noticing the wind, he took fright and began to sink. “Lord,” he cried, “save me!” Jesus put out his hand at once and held him. “You have so little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?” And as they got into the boat the wind dropped. The men in the boat bowed down before him and said, “Truly, you are the Son of God.” ❖

AUGUST 20, 2017

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – PROPER 15

THE BOOK OF GENESIS 45:1–15

Joseph could not control his feelings in front of all his retainers, and he exclaimed, “Let everyone leave me.”

No one therefore was present with him while Joseph made himself known to his brothers, but he wept so loudly that all the Egyptians heard, and the news reached Pharaoh’s palace. Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph. Is my father really still alive?” His brothers could not answer him, they were so dumbfounded at seeing him.

Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Come closer to me.” When they had come closer to him he said, “I am your brother Joseph whom you sold into Egypt. But now, do not grieve, do not reproach yourselves for having sold me here, since God sent me before you to preserve your lives. For this is the second year there has been famine in the country, and there are still five years to come without plowing or harvest. God sent me before you to assure the survival of your race on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So it was not you who sent me here but God, and he has set me up as a father

to Pharaoh, as lord of all his household and governor of the whole of Egypt.

“Return quickly to your father and tell him, ‘Your son Joseph says this: God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me without delay. You will live in the region of Goshen where you will be near me—you, your children and your grandchildren, your flocks, your cattle and all your possessions. There I shall provide for you—for there are five years of famine still to come—so that you, your household and all yours are not reduced to penury.’ You can see with your own eyes, and my brother Benjamin can see too, that I am who I say I am. Give my father a full report of all the honor I enjoy in Egypt, and of all you have seen; and quickly bring my father down here.” Then throwing his arms round the neck of his brother Benjamin he wept; and Benjamin wept on his shoulder. He kissed all his brothers, weeping on each one. Only then were his brothers able to talk to him. ❖

AUGUST 20, 2017

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – PROPER 15

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS 11:1-2A, 29 - 32

What I am saying is this: is it possible that God abandoned his people? Out of the question!

I too am an Israelite, descended from Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God never abandoned the people to whom, ages ago, God had given recognition.

There is no change of mind on God's part about the gifts given or choices made. Just as you were in the past disobedient to God, but now you have been shown mercy through their disobedience, so in the same way they are disobedient now so that through the mercy shown to you they too will receive mercy. God has imprisoned all human beings in their own disobedience only to show mercy to them all. ❖

AUGUST 20, 2017

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 15

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 15:(10–20), 21–28**

Verses 10-20 are optional – ask the preacher if they should be included in the reading.

(Jesus called the people to him and said, “Listen, and understand. What goes into the mouth does not make anyone unclean; it is what comes out of the mouth that makes someone unclean.” Then the disciples came to him and said, “Do you know that the Pharisees were shocked when they heard what you said?” He replied, “Any plant my heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots. Leave them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind; and if one blind person leads another, both will fall into a pit.”

At this, Peter said to him, “Explain the parable for us.” Jesus replied, “Even you—don’t you yet understand? Can’t you see that whatever goes into the mouth passes through the stomach and is discharged into the sewer? But whatever comes out of the mouth comes from the heart, and it is this that makes someone unclean. For from the heart come evil intentions: murder, adultery, fornication, theft, perjury, slander. These are the things

that make a person unclean. But eating with unwashed hands does not make anyone unclean.”)

Jesus left that place and withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And suddenly out came a Canaanite woman from that district and started shouting, “Lord, Son of David, take pity on me. My daughter is tormented by a devil.” But he said not a word in answer to her. And his disciples went and pleaded with him, saying, “Give her what she wants, because she keeps shouting after us.” He said in reply, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel.” But the woman had come up and was bowing low before him. “Lord,” she said, “help me.” He replied, “It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to little dogs.” She retorted, “Ah yes, Lord; but even little dogs eat the scraps that fall from their master’s table.” Then Jesus answered her, “Woman, you have great faith. Let your desire be granted.” And from that moment her daughter was well again. ❖

AUGUST 27, 2017

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 16

THE BOOK OF EXODUS 1:8 - 2:10

There came to power in Egypt a new king who had never heard of Joseph. “Look,” he said to his people, “the Israelites are now more numerous and stronger than we are. We must take precautions to stop them from increasing any further, or if war should break out, they might join the ranks of our enemies. They might take arms against us and then escape from the country.” Accordingly they put taskmasters over the Israelites to wear them down by forced labor. In this way they built the store cities of Pithom and Rameses for Pharaoh. But the harder their lives were made, the more they increased and spread, until people came to fear the Israelites. So the Egyptians gave them no mercy in the demands they made, making their lives miserable with hard labor: with digging clay, making bricks, doing various kinds of fieldwork—all sorts of labor that they imposed on them without mercy.

The king of Egypt then spoke to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was called Shiphrah, and the other Puah.

“When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women, and see them on the birth-stool. If it is a boy, kill him; if a girl, let her live.” But the midwives were God-fearing women and did not obey the orders of the king of Egypt, but allowed the boys to live. So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, “What do you mean by allowing the boys to live?” The midwives said to Pharaoh, “Hebrew women are not like Egyptian women, they are hardy and give birth before the midwife can get to them.” For this, God was good to the midwives, and the people went on increasing and growing more powerful; and since the midwives feared God, he gave them families of their own.

Pharaoh then gave all his people this command: “Throw every newborn boy into the river, but let all the girls live.” There was a man descended from Levi who had taken a woman of Levi as his wife. She conceived and gave birth to a son and, seeing what a fine child he was, she kept him hidden for three months. When she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him; coating it with bitumen and pitch, she put the child inside and laid it among the reeds at the river’s edge. His sister took up position some distance away to see what would happen to him.

Now Pharaoh's daughter went down to bathe in the river, while her maids walked along the riverside. Among the reeds she noticed the basket, and she sent her maid to fetch it. She opened it and saw the child: the baby was crying. Feeling sorry for it, she said, "This is one of the little Hebrews." The child's sister then said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and find you a nurse among the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" "Yes," said Pharaoh's daughter, and the girl went and called the child's own mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse it for me. I shall pay you myself for doing so." So the woman took the child away and nursed it. When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter who treated him like a son; she named him Moses "because," she said, "I drew him out of the water." ❖

AUGUST 27, 2017

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 16

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS 12:1—8

[pronunciation: prophesy = prah-fuh-sigh]

I urge you, brothers and sisters, remembering the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, dedicated and acceptable to God; that is the kind of worship for you, as sensible people. Do not model your behavior on the contemporary world, but let the renewing of your minds transform you, so that you may discern for yourselves what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and mature.

And through the grace that I have been given, I say this to every one of you: never pride yourself on being better than you really are, but think of yourself dispassionately, recognizing that God has given to each one his measure of faith. Just as each of us has various parts in one body, and the parts do not all have the same function: in the same way, all of us, though there are so many of us, make up one body in Christ, and as different parts we are all joined to one another. Then since the gifts that we have differ according to the grace

that was given to each of us: if it is a gift of prophecy, we should prophesy as much as our

faith tells us; if it is a gift of practical service, let us devote ourselves to serving; if it is teaching, to teaching; if it is encouraging, to encouraging. When you give, you should give generously from the heart; if you are put in charge, you must be conscientious; if you do works of mercy, let it be because you enjoy doing them. ❖

AUGUST 27, 2017

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – PROPER 16

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 16:13 - 20**

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi he put this question to his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” “But you,” he said, “who do you say I am?” Then Simon Peter spoke up and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus replied, “Simon son of Jonah, you are blessed! Because it was no human agency that revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. So I now say to you: You are Peter and on this rock I will build my community. And the gates of the underworld can never overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of Heaven: whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” Then he gave the disciples strict orders not to say to anyone that he was the Christ. ❖

SEPTEMBER 3, 2017

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 17

THE BOOK OF EXODUS 3:1-15

Moses was looking after the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led it to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. The angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame blazing from the middle of a bush. Moses looked— there was the bush blazing, but the bush was not being burnt up! Moses said, “I must go across and see this strange sight, and why the bush is not being burnt up.” When the LORD saw him going across to look, God called to him from the middle of the bush. “Moses, Moses!” God said. “Here I am,” Moses answered. “Come no nearer,” God said. “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground. I am the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” At this Moses covered his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

The LORD then said, “I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying for help on account of their taskmasters. Yes, I am well aware of their sufferings. And I have come down to rescue them from the clutches of the Egyptians and bring them up out of that country, to a country rich and broad, to a country flowing with milk and

honey, to the home of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites. Yes indeed, the Israelites' cry for help has reached me, and I have also seen the cruel way in which the Egyptians are oppressing them. So now I am sending you to Pharaoh, for you to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”

Moses said to God, “Who am I to go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” “I shall be with you,” God said, “and this is the sign by which you will know that I was the one who sent you. After you have led the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.” Moses then said to God, “Look, if I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘What is that One’s name?’ what am I to tell them?” God said to Moses, “I am the One who is.”

And God said, “This is what you are to say to the Israelites, ‘I am has sent me to you.’” God further said to Moses, “You are to tell the Israelites, ‘The LORD, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is my name for all time, and thus I am to be invoked for all generations to come.” ❖

SEPTEMBER 3, 2017

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 17

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS 12:9-21

Let love be without any pretense. Avoid what is evil; stick to what is good. In mutual love let your feelings of deep affection for one another come to expression and regard others as more important than yourself. In the service of the Lord, work not halfheartedly but with conscientiousness and an eager spirit. Be joyful in hope, persevere in hardship; keep praying regularly; share with any of God's holy people who are in need; look for opportunities to be hospitable. Bless your persecutors; never curse them, bless them. Rejoice with others when they rejoice, and be sad with those in sorrow. Give the same consideration to all others alike. Pay no regard to social standing, but meet humble people on their own terms. Do not congratulate yourself on your own wisdom. Never pay back evil with evil, but bear in mind the ideals that all regard with respect. As much as possible, and to the utmost of your ability, be at peace with everyone. Never try to get revenge: leave that, my dear friends, to the Retribution. As scripture says: Vengeance is mine—I will pay them back, the Lord promises. And more: If your enemy is hungry, give him something to eat; if thirsty, something to drink. By this, you will be heaping red-hot coals on his head. Do not be mastered by evil, but master evil with good. ❖

SEPTEMBER 3, 2017

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 17

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 16:21-28**

From then onwards Jesus began to make it clear to his disciples that he was destined to go to Jerusalem and suffer grievously at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes and to be put to death and to be raised up on the third day. Then, taking him aside, Peter started to rebuke him. “Heaven preserve you, Lord,” he said, “this must not happen to you.” But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle in my path, because you are thinking not as God thinks but as human beings do.” Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If any want to be followers of mine, let them renounce themselves and take up their cross and follow me. Any who want to save their life will lose it; but any who lose their life for my sake will find it. What, then, will any gain by winning the whole world and forfeiting their life? Or what can any offer in exchange for their life? For the Son of man is going to come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and then he will reward all according to their behavior. In truth I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of man coming with his kingdom.” ❖

SEPTEMBER 10, 2017

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 18

THE BOOK OF EXODUS 12:1–14

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, “This month must be the first of all the months for you, the first month of your year. Speak to the whole community of Israel and say, ‘On the tenth day of this month each man must take an animal from the flock for his family: one animal for each household. If the household is too small for the animal, he must join with his neighbor nearest to his house, depending on the number of persons. When you choose the animal, you will take into account what each can eat. It must be an animal without blemish, a male one year old; you may choose it either from the sheep or from the goats. You must keep it till the fourteenth day of the month when the whole assembly of the community of Israel will slaughter it at twilight. Some of the blood must then be taken and put on both doorposts and the lintel of the houses where it is eaten.

“That night, the flesh must be eaten, roasted over the fire; it must be eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but

roasted over the fire, with the head, feet and entrails. You must not leave any of it over till the morning: whatever is left till morning you must burn. This is how you must eat it: with a belt round your waist, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. You must eat it hurriedly: it is a Passover in the LORD's honor. That night, I shall go through Egypt and strike down all the firstborn in Egypt, human and beast alike, and shall execute justice on all the gods of Egypt—I, the LORD! The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are. When I see the blood I shall pass over you, and you will escape the destructive plague when I strike Egypt. This day must be commemorated by you, and you must keep it as a feast in the LORD's honor. You must keep it as a feast day for all generations; this is a decree for all time.” ❖

SEPTEMBER 10, 2017

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 18

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS 13:8–14

The only thing you should owe to anyone is love for one another, for to love the other person is to fulfill the law. All these: You shall not commit adultery, You shall not kill, You shall not steal, You shall not covet, and all the other commandments that there are, are summed up in this single phrase: You must love your neighbor as yourself. Love can cause no harm to your neighbor, and so love is the fulfillment of the Law.

Besides, you know the time has come; the moment is here for you to stop sleeping and wake up, because by now our salvation is nearer than when we first began to believe. The night is nearly over, daylight is on the way; so let us throw off everything that belongs to the darkness and equip ourselves for the light. Let us live decently, as in the light of day; with no orgies or drunkenness, no promiscuity or licentiousness, and no wrangling or jealousy. Let your armor be the Lord Jesus Christ, and stop worrying about how your disordered natural inclinations may be fulfilled. ❖

SEPTEMBER 10, 2017

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 18

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 18:15–20

Jesus said to the disciples, “If your brother does something wrong, go and have it out with him alone, between your two selves. If he listens to you, you have won back your brother. If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you: whatever the misdemeanor, the evidence of two or three witnesses is required to sustain the charge. But if he refuses to listen to these, report it to the community; and if he refuses to listen to the community, treat him like a gentile or a tax collector.

“In truth I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. In truth I tell you once again, if two of you on earth agree to ask anything at all, it will be granted to you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three meet in my name, I am there among them.” ❖

SEPTEMBER 17, 2017

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 19

THE BOOK OF EXODUS 14:19-31

The angel of God, who preceded the army of Israel, changed station and followed behind them. The pillar of cloud moved from their front and took position behind them. It came between the army of the Egyptians and the army of Israel. The cloud was dark, and the night passed without the one drawing any closer to the other the whole night long.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD drove the sea back with a strong easterly wind all night and made the sea into dry land. The waters were divided and the Israelites went on dry ground right through the sea, with walls of water to right and left of them. The Egyptians gave chase, and all Pharaoh's horses, chariots and horsemen went into the sea after them. In the morning watch, the LORD looked down on the army of the Egyptians from the pillar of fire and cloud and threw the Egyptian army into confusion. He so clogged their chariot wheels that they drove on only with difficulty, which made the Egyptians say, "Let us

flee from Israel, for the LORD is fighting on their side against the Egyptians!”

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea and let the waters flow back on the Egyptians and on their chariots and their horsemen.” Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and, as day broke, the sea returned to its bed. The fleeing Egyptians ran straight into it, and the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the middle of the sea. The returning waters washed right over the chariots and horsemen of Pharaoh’s entire army, which had followed the Israelites into the sea; not a single one of them was left. The Israelites, however, had marched through the sea on dry ground, with walls of water to right and left of them. That day, the LORD rescued Israel from the clutches of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the seashore. When Israel saw the mighty deed that the LORD had performed against the Egyptians, the people revered the LORD and put their faith in the LORD and in Moses, his servant. ❖

SEPTEMBER 17, 2017

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 19

THE LETTER TO THE ROMANS 14:1-12

Give a welcome to anyone whose faith is not strong, but do not get into arguments about doubtful points. One person may have faith enough to eat any kind of food; another, less strong, will eat only vegetables. Those who feel free to eat freely are not to condemn those who are unwilling to eat freely; nor must the person who does not eat freely pass judgment on the one who does, because God has welcomed him.

And who are you, to sit in judgment over somebody else's servant? Whether he deserves to be upheld or to fall is for his own master to decide; and he shall be upheld, for the Lord has power to uphold him. One person thinks that some days are holier than others, and another thinks them all equal. Let each of them be fully convinced in his own mind. The one who makes special observance of a particular day observes it in honor of the Lord. So the one who eats freely, eats in honor of the Lord, making his thanksgiving to God; and the one who does not, abstains from eating in honor of the Lord and makes his thanksgiving to God.

For none of us lives for himself and none of us dies for himself; while we are alive, we are living for the Lord, and when we die, we die for the Lord: and so, alive or dead, we belong to the Lord. It was for this purpose that Christ both died and came to life again: so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. Why, then, does one of you make himself judge over his brother or sister, and why does another among you despise his brother or sister? All of us will have to stand in front of the judgment seat of God. As scripture says: “By my own life says the Lord, every knee shall bow before me, every tongue shall give glory to God.” It is to God, then, that all of us will have to give an account of ourselves. ❖

SEPTEMBER 17, 2017

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 19

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 18:21-35**

Peter went up to Jesus and said, “Lord, how often must I forgive my brother or sister if I am wronged? As often as seven times?” Jesus answered, “Not seven, I tell you, but seventy-seven times.

“And so the kingdom of Heaven may be compared to a king who decided to settle his accounts with his servants. When the reckoning began, they brought him a man who owed ten thousand talents; he had no means of paying, so his master gave orders that he should be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, to meet the debt. At this, the servant threw himself down at his master’s feet, with the words, ‘Be patient with me and I will pay the whole sum.’ And the servant’s master felt so sorry for him that he let him go and cancelled the debt.

“Now as this servant went out, he happened to meet a fellow servant who owed him one hundred denarii; and he seized him by the throat and began to throttle him, saying, ‘Pay what you owe me.’ His fellow servant fell

at his feet and appealed to him, saying, ‘Be patient with me and I will pay you.’ But the other would not agree; on the contrary, he had him thrown into prison till he should pay the debt.

His fellow servants were deeply distressed when they saw what had happened, and they went to their master and reported the whole affair to him. Then the master sent for the man and said to him, ‘You wicked servant, I cancelled all that debt of yours when you appealed to me. Were you not bound, then, to have pity on your fellow servant just as I had pity on you?’ And in his anger the master handed him over to the torturers till he should pay all his debt. And that is how my heavenly Father will deal with you unless you each forgive your brother or sister from your heart.” ❖

SEPTEMBER 24, 2017

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – PROPER 20

THE BOOK OF EXODUS 16:2–15

The whole community of Israelites began complaining about Moses and Aaron in the desert and said to them, “Why did we not die at the LORD’s hand in Egypt, where we used to sit round the flesh pots and could eat to our heart’s content! As it is, you have led us into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death!” the LORD then said to Moses, “Look, I shall rain down bread for you from the heavens. Each day the people must go out and collect their ration for the day; I propose to test them in this way to see whether they will follow my law or not. On the sixth day, however, when they prepare what they have brought in, this must be twice as much as they collect on ordinary days.”

Moses and Aaron then said to the whole community of Israelites, “This evening you will know that it was the LORD who brought you out of Egypt, and tomorrow morning you will see the glory of the LORD, for the LORD has heard your complaints about him. What are we, that your complaint should be against us?” Moses then said, “This evening the LORD will give you meat

to eat, and tomorrow morning bread to your heart's content, for the LORD has heard your complaints about him. What do we count for? Your complaints are not against us, but against the LORD." Moses then said to Aaron, "Say to the whole community of Israelites, 'Approach the LORD's presence, for he has heard your complaints.'" "

As Aaron was speaking to the whole community of Israelites, they turned towards the desert, and there the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. The LORD then spoke to Moses and said, "I have heard the Israelites' complaints. Speak to them as follows, 'At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will have bread to your heart's content, and then you will know that I am the LORD your God.'" That evening, quails flew in and covered the camp, and next morning there was a layer of dew all round the camp. When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the desert was something fine and granular, as fine as hoarfrost on the ground. As soon as the Israelites saw this, they said to one another, "What is that?" not knowing what it was. "That," Moses told them, "is the food which the LORD has given you to eat." ❖

SEPTEMBER 24, 2017

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 20

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE PHILIPPIANS 1:21-30

Life to me, of course, is Christ, but then death would be a positive gain. On the other hand again, if to be alive in the body gives me an opportunity for fruitful work, I do not know which I should choose. I am caught in this dilemma: I want to be gone and to be with Christ, and this is by far the stronger desire—and yet for your sake to stay alive in this body is a more urgent need.

This much I know for certain, that I shall stay and stand by you all, to encourage your advance and your joy in the faith, so that my return to be among you may increase to overflowing your pride in Jesus Christ on my account. But you must always behave in a way that is worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come to you and see for myself or whether I only hear all about you from a distance, I shall find that you are standing firm and united in spirit, battling—as a team with a single aim—for the faith of the gospel, undismayed by any of your opponents. This will be a clear sign, for them that they are to be lost, and for you that you are to be saved.

This comes from God, for you have been granted the privilege for Christ's sake not only of believing in him but of suffering for him as well; you are fighting the same battle which you saw me fighting for him and which you hear I am fighting still. ❖

SEPTEMBER 24, 2017

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 20

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 20:1–16**

Jesus said to the disciples “Now the kingdom of Heaven is like a landowner going out at daybreak to hire workers for his vineyard. He made an agreement with the workers for one denarius a day and sent them to his vineyard. Going out at about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the market place and said to them, ‘You go to my vineyard too and I will give you a fair wage.’ So they went. At about the sixth hour and again at about the ninth hour, he went out and did the same.

“Then at about the eleventh hour he went out and found more men standing around, and he said to them, ‘Why have you been standing here idle all day?’ ‘Because no one has hired us,’ they answered. He said to them, ‘You go into my vineyard too.’ In the evening, the owner of the vineyard said to his bailiff, ‘Call the workers and pay them their wages, starting with the last arrivals and ending with the first.’ So those who were hired at about

the eleventh hour came forward and received one denarius each.

“When the first came, they expected to get more, but they too received one denarius each. They took it, but grumbled at the landowner saying, ‘The men who came last have done only one hour, and you have treated them the same as us, though we have done a heavy day’s work in all the heat.’ He answered one of them and said, ‘My friend, I am not being unjust to you; did we not agree on one denarius? Take your earnings and go. I choose to pay the last comer as much as I pay you. Have I no right to do what I like with my own? Why should you be envious because I am generous?’ Thus the last will be first, and the first, last.” ❖

OCTOBER 1, 2017

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – PROPER 21

THE BOOK OF EXODUS 17:1–7

The whole community of Israelites left the desert of Sin, traveling by stages as the LORD ordered. They pitched camp at Rephidim where there was no water for the people to drink. The people took issue with Moses for this and said, “Give us water to drink.” Moses replied, “Why take issue with me? Why do you put the LORD to the test?” But tormented by thirst, the people complained to Moses. “Why did you bring us out of Egypt,” they said, “only to make us, our children and our livestock, die of thirst?” Moses appealed to the LORD for help. “How am I to deal with this people?” he said. “Any moment now they will stone me!”

The LORD then said to Moses, “Go on ahead of the people, taking some of the elders of Israel with you; in your hand take the staff with which you struck the River, and go. I shall be waiting for you there on the rock (at Horeb). Strike the rock, and water will come out for the people to drink.” This was what Moses did, with the elders of Israel looking on. He gave the place the names Massah and Meribah because of the

Israelites' contentiousness and because they put The LORD to the test by saying, "Is the LORD with us, or not?" ❖

OCTOBER 1, 2017

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 21

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE PHILIPPIANS 2:1–13

So if in Christ there is anything that will move you, any incentive in love, any fellowship in the Spirit, any warmth or sympathy—I appeal to you, make my joy complete by being of a single mind, one in love, one in heart and one in mind. Nothing is to be done out of jealousy or vanity; instead, out of humility of mind everyone should give preference to others, everyone pursuing not selfish interests but those of others. Make your own the mind of Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, did not count equality with God something to be grasped. But he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, becoming as human beings are; and being in every way like a human being, he was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross. And for this God raised him high, and gave him the name which is above all other names; so that all beings in the heavens, on earth and in the underworld, should bend the knee at the name of Jesus and that every tongue should acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

So, my dear friends, you have always been obedient; your obedience must not be limited to times when I am present. Now that I am absent it must be more in evidence, so work out your salvation in fear and trembling. It is God who, for his own generous purpose, gives you the intention and the powers to act. ❖

OCTOBER 1, 2017

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 21

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 21:23-32

Jesus had gone into the Temple and was teaching, when the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him and said, “What authority have you for acting like this? And who gave you this authority?” In reply Jesus said to them, “And I will ask you a question, just one; if you tell me the answer to it, then I will tell you my authority for acting like this. John’s baptism: what was its origin, heavenly or human?” And they argued this way among themselves, “If we say heavenly, he will retort to us, ‘Then why did you refuse to believe him?’; but if we say human, we have the people to fear, for they all hold that John was a prophet.” So their reply to Jesus was, “We do not know.” And he retorted to them, “Nor will I tell you my authority for acting like this.”

“What is your opinion? A man had two sons. He went and said to the first, ‘My boy, go and work in the vineyard today.’ He answered, ‘I will not go,’ but afterwards thought better of it and went. The man then went and said the same thing to the second who

answered, ‘Certainly, sir,’ but did not go. Which of the two did the father’s will?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “In truth I tell you, tax collectors and prostitutes are making their way into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you, showing the way of uprightness, but you did not believe him, and yet the tax collectors and prostitutes did. Even after seeing that, you refused to think better of it and believe in him.” ❖

OCTOBER 8, 2017

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – PROPER 22

THE BOOK OF EXODUS 20:1–4, 7–9, 12–20

God spoke all these words, saying “I am the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt, where you lived as slaves.

“You shall have no other gods to rival me.

“You shall not make yourself a carved image or any likeness of anything in heaven above, or on earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth.

“You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not leave unpunished anyone who misuses my name.

“Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.

“Honor your father and your mother so that you may live long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

“You shall not kill.

“You shall not commit adultery.

“You shall not steal.

“You shall not give false evidence against your neighbor.

“You shall not set your heart on your neighbor’s house. You shall not set your heart on your neighbor’s spouse, or servant—man or woman—or ox, or donkey, or any of your neighbor’s possessions.”

Seeing the thunder pealing, the lightning flashing, the trumpet blasting and the mountain smoking, the people were all terrified and kept their distance. “Speak to us yourself,” they said to Moses, “and we will obey; but do not let God speak to us, or we shall die.” Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid; God has come to test you, so that your fear, being always in your mind, may keep you from sinning.” ❖

OCTOBER 8, 2017

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – PROPER 22

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE PHILIPPIANS 3:4B–14

If anyone claims to rely on the flesh, my claim is better. Circumcised on the eighth day of my life, I was born of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrew parents. In the matter of the Law, I was a Pharisee; as for religious fervor, I was a persecutor of the Church; as for the uprightness embodied in the Law, I was faultless.

But what were once my assets I now through Christ Jesus count as losses. Yes, I will go further: because of the supreme advantage of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, I count everything else as loss. For him I have accepted the loss of all other things, and look on them all as filth if only I can gain Christ and be given a place in him, with the uprightness I have gained not from the Law, but through faith in Christ, an uprightness from God, based on faith, that I may come to know him and the power of his resurrection, and partake of his sufferings by being molded to the pattern of his death, striving towards the goal of resurrection from the dead.

Not that I have secured it already, nor yet reached my goal, but I am still pursuing it in the attempt to take hold of the prize for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not reckon myself as having taken hold of it; I can only say that forgetting all that lies behind me, and straining forward to what lies in front, I am racing towards the finishing point to win the prize of God's heavenly call in Christ Jesus. ❖

OCTOBER 8, 2017

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 22

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 21:33-46

Jesus said to the chief priests and elders in the temple, “Listen to another parable. There was a man, a landowner, who planted a vineyard; he fenced it round, dug a winepress in it and built a tower; then he leased it to tenants and went abroad. When vintage time drew near he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his servants, thrashed one, killed another and stoned a third. Next he sent some more servants, this time a larger number, and they dealt with them in the same way.

“Finally he sent his son to them thinking, ‘They will respect my son.’ But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, ‘This is the heir. Come on, let us kill him and take over his inheritance.’ So they seized him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?”

They answered, “He will bring those wretches to a wretched end and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will deliver the produce to him at the proper time.”

Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this is the Lord’s doing and we marvel at it’? I tell you, then, that the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.”

When they heard his parables, the chief priests and the scribes realized he was speaking about them, but though they would have liked to arrest him they were afraid of the crowds, who looked on him as a prophet.



OCTOBER 15, 2014

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 23

THE BOOK OF EXODUS 32:1–14

When the people saw that Moses was a long time before coming down the mountain, they gathered round Aaron and said to him, “Get to work, make us a god to go at our head; for that Moses, the man who brought us here from Egypt—we do not know what has become of him.” Aaron replied, “Strip off the gold rings in the ears of your wives and your sons and daughters, and bring them to me.” The people all stripped off the gold rings from their ears and brought them to Aaron. He received what they gave him, melted it down in a mould and with it made the statue of a calf. “Israel,” the people shouted, “here is your God who brought you here from Egypt!” Observing this, Aaron built an altar before the statue and made this proclamation, “Tomorrow will be a feast in the LORD’s honor.” Early next morning they sacrificed burnt offerings and brought communion sacrifices. The people then sat down to eat and drink, and afterwards got up to amuse themselves.

The LORD then said to Moses, “Go down at once, for your people whom you brought here from Egypt have

become corrupt. They have quickly left the way which I ordered them to follow. They have cast themselves a metal calf, worshipped it and offered sacrifice to it, shouting, ‘Israel, here is your God who brought you here from Egypt!’” The LORD then said to Moses, “I know these people; I know how obstinate they are! So leave me now, so that my anger can blaze at them and I can put an end to them! I shall make a great nation out of you instead.”

Moses tried to pacify the LORD his God. “LORD,’ he said, “why should your anger blaze at your people, whom you have brought out of Egypt by your great power and mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians say, ‘That One brought them out with evil intention, to slaughter them in the mountains and wipe them off the face of the earth?’ Give up your burning wrath; relent over this disaster intended for your people. Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to whom you swore by your very self and made this promise: ‘I shall make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven, and this whole country of which I have spoken, I shall give to your descendants, and it will be their heritage for ever.’” The LORD then relented over the disaster which She had intended to inflict on the people. ❖

OCTOBER 15, 2014

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 23

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE PHILIPPIANS 4:1–9

My brothers, sisters and dear friends whom I miss so much, my joy and my crown, hold firm in the Lord, dear friends. I urge Euodia, and I urge Syntyche to come to agreement with each other in the Lord; and I ask you, Syzygus, really to be a partner and help them. These women have struggled hard for the gospel with me, along with Clement and all my other fellow-workers, whose names are written in the book of life. Always be joyful, then, in the Lord; I repeat, be joyful. Let your good sense be obvious to everybody. The Lord is near. Never worry about anything; but tell God all your desires of every kind in prayer and petition shot through with gratitude, and the peace of God which is beyond our understanding will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, let your minds be filled with everything that is true, everything that is honorable, everything that is upright and pure, everything that we love and admire—with whatever is good and praiseworthy. Keep doing everything you learnt from me and were told by me and have heard or seen me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you. ❖

OCTOBER 15, 2014

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 23

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 22:1–14

Jesus began to speak to the chief priests and elders in parables once again, “The kingdom of Heaven may be compared to a king who gave a feast for his son’s wedding. He sent his servants to call those who had been invited, but they would not come. Next he sent some more servants with the words, ‘Tell those who have been invited: Look, my banquet is all prepared, my oxen and fattened cattle have been slaughtered, everything is ready. Come to the wedding.’ But they were not interested: one went off to his farm, another to his business, and the rest seized his servants, maltreated them and killed them.

“The king was furious. He dispatched his troops, destroyed those murderers and burnt their town. Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding is ready; but as those who were invited proved to be unworthy, go to the main crossroads and invite everyone you can find to come to the wedding.’ So these servants went out onto the roads and collected together everyone they could

find, bad and good alike; and the wedding hall was filled with guests.

“When the king came in to look at the guests he noticed one man who was not wearing a wedding garment, and said to him, ‘How did you get in here, my friend, without a wedding garment?’ And the man was silent. Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot and throw him into the darkness outside, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.’ For many are invited but not all are chosen.” ❖

OCTOBER 22, 2017

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 24

THE BOOK OF EXODUS 33:12–23

Moses said to the LORD, “Look, you say to me, ‘Make the people move on,’ but you have not told me whom you are going to send with me, although you have said, ‘I know you by name and you enjoy my favor.’ If indeed I enjoy your favor, please show me your ways, so that I understand you and continue to enjoy your favor; consider too that this nation is your people.” The LORD then said, “I myself shall go with you and I shall give you rest.”

To which Moses said, “If you do not come yourself, do not make us move on from here, for how can it be known that I and my people enjoy your favor, if not by your coming with us? By this we shall be marked out, I and your people, from all the peoples on the face of the earth.” The LORD then said to Moses, “Again I shall do what you have asked, because you enjoy my favor and because I know you by name.”

Moses then said, “Please show me your glory.” The LORD said, “I shall make all my goodness pass before you, and before you I shall pronounce the name

Yahweh; and I am gracious to those to whom I am gracious and I take pity on those on whom I take pity. But my face”, God said, “you cannot see, for no human being can see me and survive.” Then the LORD said, “Here is a place near me. You will stand on the rock, and when my glory passes by, I shall put you in a cleft of the rock and shield you with my hand until I have gone past. Then I shall take my hand away and you will see my back; but my face will not be seen.” ❖

OCTOBER 22, 2017

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 24

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS 1:1—10

Paul, Silvanus and Timothy, to the Church in Thessalonica which is in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace to you and peace. I always thank God for you all, mentioning you in my prayers continually. I remember before our God and Father how active is the faith, how unsparing the love, how persevering the hope which you have from our Lord Jesus Christ. I know, brothers loved by God, that you have been chosen, because my gospel came to you not only in words, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with great effect. And you observed the sort of life I lived when I was with you, which was for your sake. You took me and the Lord as your model, welcoming the word with the joy of the Holy Spirit in spite of great hardship.

And so you became an example to all believers in Macedonia and Achaia since it was from you that the word of the Lord rang out—and not only throughout Macedonia and Achaia, for your faith in God has spread everywhere. I do not need to tell other people about it:

other people tell me how I started the work among you, how you broke with the worship of false gods when you were converted to God and became servants of the living and true God; and how you are now waiting for Jesus, his Son, whom God raised from the dead, to come from heaven. It is he who saves us from the retribution which is coming. ❖

OCTOBER 22, 2017

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 24

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 22:15–22

The Pharisees went away to work out between them how to trap Jesus in what he said. And they sent their disciples to him, together with some Herodians, to say “Master, we know that you are an honest person and teach the way of God in all honesty, and that you are not afraid of anyone, because human rank means nothing to you. Give us your opinion, then. Is it permissible to pay taxes to Caesar or not?” But Jesus was aware of their malice and replied, “You hypocrites! Why are you putting me to the test? Show me the money you pay the tax with.” They handed him a denarius, and he said, “Whose portrait is this? Whose title?” They replied, “Caesar’s.”

Then he said to them, “Very well, pay Caesar what belongs to Caesar—and God what belongs to God.” When they heard this they were amazed; they left him alone and went away. ❖

OCTOBER 29, 2017

TWENTY FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – PROPER 25

THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY 34:1–12

Leaving the Plains of Moab, Moses went up Mount Nebo, the peak of Pisgah opposite Jericho, and the LORD showed him the whole country: Gilead as far as Dan, the whole of Naphtali, the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, the whole country of Judah as far as the Western Sea, the Negeb, and the region of the Valley of Jericho, city of palm trees, as far as Zoar. The LORD said to him, “This is the country which I promised on oath to give to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, saying: ‘I shall give it to your descendants.’ I have allowed you to see it for yourself, but you will not cross into it.”

There in the country of Moab, Moses, servant of the LORD, died as the LORD decreed; God buried him in the valley, in the country of Moab, opposite Beth–Peor; but to this day no one has ever found his grave. Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died, his eye undimmed, his vigor unimpaired. The Israelites wept for Moses on the Plains of Moab for thirty days.

The days of weeping for the mourning rites of Moses came to an end. Joshua son of Nun was filled with the

spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him, and him the Israelites obeyed, carrying out the order which the LORD had given to Moses. Since then, there has never been such a prophet in Israel as Moses, the man whom the LORD knew face to face. What signs and wonders the LORD caused him to perform in Egypt against Pharaoh, all his servants and his whole country! How mighty the hand and great the fear that Moses wielded in the eyes of all Israel! ❖

OCTOBER 29, 2017

TWENTY FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 25

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS 2:1—8

You know yourselves, my brothers, that our visit to you has not been pointless. Although, as you know, we had received rough treatment and insults at Philippi, God gave us the courage to speak his gospel to you fearlessly, in spite of great opposition. Our encouragement to you does not come from any delusion or impure motives or trickery. No, God has approved us to be entrusted with the gospel, and this is how we preach, seeking to please not human beings but God who tests our hearts. Indeed, we have never acted with the thought of flattering anyone, as you know, nor as an excuse for greed, God is our witness; nor have we ever looked for honor from human beings, either from you or anybody else, when we could have imposed ourselves on you with full weight, as apostles of Christ. Instead, we lived unassumingly among you. Like a mother feeding and looking after her children, we felt so devoted to you, that we would have been happy to share with you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, so dear had you become. ❖

OCTOBER 29, 2017

TWENTY FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – PROPER 25
THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 22:34–46

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they got together and, to put him to the test one of them put a further question, “Master, which is the greatest commandment of the Law?” Jesus said to him, “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it: You must love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets too.” While the Pharisees were gathered round, Jesus put to them this question, “What is your opinion about the Christ? Whose son is he?” They told him, “David’s.” He said to them, “Then how is it that David, moved by the Spirit, calls him Lord, where he says: ‘The Lord declared to my Lord, take your seat at my right hand, till I have made your enemies your footstool?’ If David calls him Lord, how then can he be his son?” No one could think of anything to say in reply, and from that day no one dared to ask him. ❖

NOVEMBER 5, 2017

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

THE REVELATION OF JOHN 7:9-17

After that I saw that there was a huge number, impossible for anyone to count, of people from every nation, race, tribe and language; they were standing in front of the throne and in front of the Lamb, dressed in white robes and holding palms in their hand. 'Salvation to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!' And all the angels who were standing in a circle round the throne, surrounding the elders and the four living creatures, prostrated themselves before the throne, and touched the ground with their foreheads, worshipping God with these words: Amen. Praise and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honor and power and strength to our God forever and ever. Amen. One of the elders then spoke and asked me, 'Who are these people, dressed in white robes, and where have they come from?' I answered him, 'You can tell me, sir.' Then he said, 'These are the people who have been through the great trial; they have washed their robes white again in the blood of the Lamb. That is why they are standing in front of God's throne and serving him day and night in his sanctuary; and the One who sits on the throne will

spread his tent over them. They will never hunger or thirst again; sun and scorching wind will never plague them, because the Lamb who is at the heart of the throne will be their shepherd and will guide them to springs of living water; and God will wipe away all tears from their eyes.' ❖

NOVEMBER 5, 2017

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

THE FIRST LETTER OF JOHN 3:1-3

You must see what great love the Father has lavished on us by letting us be called God's children -- which is what we are! The reason why the world does not acknowledge us is that it did not acknowledge him. My dear friends, we are already God's children, but what we shall be in the future has not yet been revealed. We are well aware that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he really is. And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure. ❖

NOVEMBER 5, 2017

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 5:1-12**

Seeing the crowds, he went onto the mountain. And when he was seated his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them: How blessed are the poor in spirit: the kingdom of Heaven is theirs. Blessed are the gentle: they shall have the earth as inheritance. Blessed are those who mourn: they shall be comforted. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for uprightness: they shall have their fill. Blessed are the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them. Blessed are the pure in heart: they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: they shall be recognized as children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted in the cause of uprightness: the kingdom of Heaven is theirs. Blessed are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven; this is how they persecuted the prophets before you. ❖

NOVEMBER 12, 2017

TWENTY THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 27

O WISDOM

A READING FROM JOSHUA 24:1-3A, 14-25

Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors-- Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor-- lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods. Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan and made his offspring many.

"Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River, and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."

Then the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God."

But Joshua said to the people, "You cannot serve the LORD; for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm, and consume you, after having done you good." And the people said to Joshua, "No, we will serve the LORD!" Then Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD, to serve him." And they said, "We are witnesses." He said, "Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel." The people said to Joshua, "The LORD our God we will serve, and him we will obey." So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made statutes and ordinances for them at Shechem. ❖

NOVEMBER 12, 2017

TWENTY THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 27

O WISDOM

**A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO THE
THESSALONIANS 4:13-18**

We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words. ❖

NOVEMBER 12, 2017

TWENTY THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — PROPER 27

O WISDOM

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW 25:1-13**

Jesus said, "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour." ❖

**NOVEMBER 19, 2017 – TWENTY FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST – PROPER 28**

O ADONAI

THE BOOK OF JUDGES 4:1–7

The Israelites again began doing what is evil in the LORD’s eyes, and the LORD handed them over to Jabin, king of Canaan, who reigned at Hazor. The commander of his army was Sisera, who lived in Haroshet-ha-Goiim. The Israelites then cried to the LORD; for Jabin had nine hundred iron chariots and had cruelly oppressed the Israelites for twenty years.

Deborah, a prophetess, wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at the time. She used to sit under Deborah’s Palm between Ramah and Bethel in the highlands of Ephraim, and the Israelites would come to her for justice. She sent for Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali, and said to him, “The LORD, God of Israel, has commanded ‘Go! March to Mount Tabor and with you take ten thousand of the sons of Naphtali and the sons of Zebulun. I shall entice Sisera, the commander of Jabin’s army, to encounter you at the Torrent of Kishon with his chariots and troops; and I shall put him into your power.’” ❖

Jabin: JAY – bin

Zebulun: ZEH – buh – luhn

Lappidoth: LAH – pee – dohth

Hazor: HAY – zohr

Kishon: KEE – shahn

Ephraim: EFF – ray – em

Sisera: SIH – se – ruh

Barak: BAY – rock

Abinoam: ah – BIN – oh – am

Kedesh: KAY – desh

Naphtali: naf – TAH – lee

Haroshet-ha-Goiim: ha – ROW – sheth – ha – gaw – YEEM

**NOVEMBER 19, 2017 – TWENTY FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST – PROPER 28**

O ADONAI

THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS 5:1–11

About times and dates, brothers and sisters, there is no need to write to you, for you are well aware in any case that the Day of the Lord is going to come like a thief in the night. It is when people are saying, “How quiet and peaceful it is” that sudden destruction falls on them, as suddenly as labor pains come on a pregnant woman; and there is no escape. But you, brothers and sisters, do not live in the dark, that the Day should take you unawares like a thief. No, you are all children of light and children of the day: we do not belong to the night or to darkness, so we should not go on sleeping, as everyone else does, but stay wide awake and sober. Night is the time for sleepers to sleep and night the time for drunkards to be drunk, but we belong to the day and we should be sober; let us put on faith and love for a breastplate, and the hope of salvation for a helmet. God destined us not for retribution, but to win salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that, awake or asleep, we should still live united to him. So give encouragement to each other, and keep strengthening one another, as you do already. ❖

**NOVEMBER 19, 2017 – TWENTY FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST – PROPER 28**

O ADONAI

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 25:14–30**

Jesus said to the disciples “The Kingdom of heaven is like a man about to go abroad who summoned his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to a third, one, each in proportion to his ability. Then he set out on his journey. The man who had received the five talents promptly went and traded with them and made five more. The man who had received two made two more in the same way. But the man who had received one went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

“Now a long time afterwards, the master of those servants came back and went through his accounts with them. The man who had received the five talents came forward bringing five more. ‘Sir,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five talents; here are five more that I have made.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy servant; you have

shown you are trustworthy in small things; I will trust you with greater; come and join in your master's happiness.'

Next the man with the two talents came forward. 'Sir,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two talents; here are two more that I have made.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy servant; you have shown you are trustworthy in small things; I will trust you with greater; come and join in your master's happiness.'

“Last came forward the man who had the single talent. ‘Sir,’ said he, ‘I had heard you were a hard man, reaping where you had not sown and gathering where you had not scattered; so I was afraid, and I went off and hid your talent in the ground. Here it is; it was yours, you have it back.’ But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant! So you knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered? Well then, you should have deposited my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have got my money back with interest. So now, take the talent from him and give it to the man who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will be given more, and he will

have more than enough; but anyone who has not, will be deprived even of what he has. As for this good-for-nothing servant, throw him into the darkness outside, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.’” ❖

**NOVEMBER 26, 2017 – THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
CHRIST THE KING – O REX GENTIUM
THE PROPHET EZEKIEL 34:11–16, 20–24**

For the LORD says this: Look, I myself shall take care of my flock and look after it. As a shepherd looks after his flock when he is with his scattered sheep, so shall I look after my sheep. I shall rescue them from wherever they have been scattered on the day of clouds and darkness. I shall bring them back from the peoples where they are; I shall gather them back from the countries and bring them back to their own land. I shall pasture them on the mountains of Israel, in the ravines and in all the inhabited parts of the country. I shall feed them in good pasturage; the highest mountains of Israel will be their grazing ground. There they will rest in good grazing grounds; they will browse in rich pastures on the mountains of Israel. I myself shall pasture my sheep, I myself shall give them rest — declares the LORD. I shall look for the lost one, bring back the stray, bandage the injured and make the sick strong. I shall watch over the fat and healthy. I shall be a true shepherd to them.

Very well, the LORD says this: I myself shall judge between the fat sheep and the thin sheep. Since you have jostled with flank and shoulder and butted all the ailing sheep with your horns, until you have scattered them outside, I shall come and save my sheep and stop them from being victimized. I shall judge between sheep and sheep. I shall raise up one shepherd, my servant David, and put him in charge of them to pasture them; he will pasture them and be their shepherd. I, the LORD, shall be their God, and my servant David will be ruler among them. I, the LORD, have spoken. ❖

**NOVEMBER 26, 2017 – THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
CHRIST THE KING – O REX GENTIUM
PAUL'S LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS 1:15–23**

Having once heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus, and your love for all God's holy people, I have never failed to thank God for you and to remember you in my prayers. May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a spirit of wisdom and perception of what is revealed, to bring you to full knowledge of God. May that One enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what hope the divine call holds for you, how rich is the glory of the heritage God offers among the holy people, and how extraordinarily great is the power that has been exercised for us believers; this accords with the strength of God's power at work in Christ, the power which was exercised in raising him from the dead and enthroning him at God's right hand in heaven, far above every principality, ruling force, power or sovereignty, or any other name that can be named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. God has put all things under his feet and made him, as he is above all things, the head of the Church; which is his Body, the fullness of him who is filled, all in all. ❖

**NOVEMBER 26, 2017 – THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
CHRIST THE KING – O REX GENTIUM
THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 25:31–46**

Jesus said to the disciples “When the Son of man comes in his glory, escorted by all the angels, then he will take his seat on his throne of glory. All nations will be assembled before him and he will separate people one from another as the shepherd separates sheep from goats. He will place the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those on his right hand, ‘Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take as your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you made me welcome, lacking clothes and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me.’

“Then the upright will say to him in reply, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and make you welcome, lacking clothes and clothe

you? When did we find you sick or in prison and go to see you?’

And the King will answer, ‘In truth I tell you, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers or sisters of mine, you did it to me.’

“Then he will say to those on his left hand, ‘Go away from me, with your curse upon you, to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you never gave me food, I was thirsty and you never gave me anything to drink, I was a stranger and you never made me welcome, lacking clothes and you never clothed me, sick and in prison and you never visited me.’ Then it will be their turn to ask, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty, a stranger or lacking clothes, sick or in prison, and did not come to your help?’ Then he will answer, ‘In truth I tell you, in so far as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these, you neglected to do it to me.’ And they will go away to eternal punishment, and the upright to eternal life.” ❖

DECEMBER 3, 2017 – THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

O EMMANUEL

THE PROPHET ISAIAH 64:1–9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence—as fire sets brushwood alight, as fire makes water boil—to make your name known to your foes; the nations would tremble at your presence, at the unexpected miracles you would do. (Oh, that you would come down, in your presence the mountains would quake!) Never has anyone heard, no ear has heard, no eye has seen any god but you act like this for the sake of those who trust. You come to meet those who are happy to act uprightly; keeping your ways reminds them of you.

Yes, you have been angry and we have been sinners; now we persist in your ways and we shall be saved. We have all been like unclean things and our upright deeds like filthy rags. We wither, all of us, like leaves, and all our misdeeds carry us off like the wind. There is no one to invoke your name, to rouse himself to hold fast to you, for you have hidden your face from us and given us up to the power of our

misdeeds. And yet, LORD, you are our Father; we
the clay and you our potter, all of us are the work of
your hands. LORD, do not let your anger go too far
and do not remember guilt forever. Look, please, we
are all your people; your holy cities have become a
desert, Zion has become a desert, Jerusalem a
wasteland. ❖

DECEMBER 3, 2017 – THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

O EMMANUEL

PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS 1:3–9

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I am continually thanking God about you, for the grace of God which you have been given in Christ Jesus; in him you have been richly endowed in every kind of utterance and knowledge; so firmly has witness to Christ taken root in you. And so you are not lacking in any gift as you wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed; he will continue to give you strength till the very end, so that you will be irreproachable on the Day of our Lord Jesus Christ. You can rely on God, who has called you to be partners with God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. ❖

DECEMBER 3, 2017 – THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

O EMMANUEL

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

ACCORDING TO MARK 13:24–37

Jesus said to the disciples, “In those days, after the time of distress, the sun will be darkened, the moon will not give its light, the stars will come falling out of the sky and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then he will send the angels to gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the world to the ends of the sky.

“Take the fig tree as a parable: as soon as its twigs grow supple and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. So with you, you see these things happening: know that he is near, right at the gates. In truth I tell you, before this generation has passed away all these things will have taken place. Sky and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. But as for that day or hour, nobody knows it, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son; no one but the Father.

“Be on your guard, stay awake, because you never know when the time will come. It is like a man traveling abroad: he has gone from his home, and left his servants in charge, each with his own work to do; and he has told the doorkeeper to stay awake. So stay awake, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming—evening, midnight, cockcrow or dawn. If he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep. And what I am saying to you I say to all: Stay awake!” ❖

DECEMBER 10, 2017 – THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
O RADIX JESSE
THE PROPHET ISAIAH 40:1–11

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.
“Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and cry to her that her period of service is ended, that her guilt has been atoned for; from the hand of the LORD, she has received double punishment for all her sins.” A voice cries, “Prepare in the desert a way for the LORD. Make a straight highway for our God across the wastelands. Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be leveled, every cliff become a plateau, every escarpment a plain; then the glory of the LORD will be revealed and all humanity will see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

A voice said, “Cry aloud!” and I said, “What shall I cry?” “All humanity is grass and all its beauty like the wild flower’s. The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the LORD blows on them. (The grass is surely the people.) The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God remains for ever.” Go up on a high mountain, messenger of Zion. Shout as loud as you can, messenger of Jerusalem!

Shout fearlessly, say to the towns of Judah, “Here is your God.” Here is the LORD God coming with power, his arm maintains his authority, his reward is with him and his prize precedes him. He is like a shepherd feeding his flock, gathering lambs in his arms, holding them against his breast and leading to their rest the mother ewes. ❖

**DECEMBER 10, 2017 — THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
O RADIX JESSE**

THE SECOND LETTER OF PETER 3:8—15A

There is one thing, my dear friends, that you must never forget: that with the Lord, a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not being slow in carrying out his promises, as some people think he is; rather is he being patient with you, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to repentance. The Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will vanish, the elements will catch fire and melt away, the earth and all that it contains will be burned up. Since everything is coming to an end like this, what holy and saintly lives you should be living while you wait for the Day of God to come, and try to hasten its coming: on that Day the sky will dissolve in flames and the elements melt in the heat. What we are waiting for, relying on his promises, is the new heavens and new earth, where uprightness will be at home. So then, my dear friends, while you are waiting, do your best to live blameless and unsullied lives so that he will find you at peace. Think of our Lord's patience as your opportunity to be saved. ❖

DECEMBER 10, 2017 — THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
O RADIX JESSE
THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
ACCORDING TO MARK 1:1—8

The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the prophet Isaiah: Look, I am going to send my messenger in front of you to prepare your way before you. A voice of one that cries in the desert: Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight.

John the Baptist was in the desert, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptized by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, “After me is coming someone who is more powerful than me, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” ❖

DECEMBER 17, 2017 – THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
O CLAVIS DAVID
THE PROPHET ISAIAH 61:1–4, 8–11

The spirit of the LORD is on me, for the LORD has anointed me. God has sent me to bring the news to the afflicted, to soothe the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, release to those in prison, to proclaim a year of favor from the LORD and a day of vengeance for our God, to comfort all who mourn (to give to Zion's mourners), to give them for ashes a garland, for mourning-dress the oil of gladness, for despondency festal attire; and they will be called 'terebinths of saving justice,' planted by the LORD to glorify God.

They will rebuild the ancient ruins, they will raise what has long lain waste, they will restore the ruined cities, all that has lain waste for ages past. For I am the LORD: I love fair judgment, I hate robbery and wrongdoing, and I shall reward them faithfully and make an everlasting covenant with them. Their race will be famous throughout the nations and their offspring throughout the peoples. All who see them

will admit that they are a race whom the LORD has blessed.

I exult for joy in the LORD, my soul rejoices in my God, who has clothed me in garments of salvation, who has wrapped me in a cloak of saving justice, like a bridegroom wearing his garland, like a bride adorned in her jewels. For as the earth sends up its shoots and a garden makes seeds sprout, so the LORD God makes saving justice and praise spring up in the sight of all nations. ❖

DECEMBER 17, 2017 — THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

O CLAVIS DAVID

PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE THESSALONIANS 5:16–24

Always be joyful; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks; this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus. Do not stifle the Spirit or despise the gift of prophecy with contempt; test everything and hold on to what is good and shun every form of evil. May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may your spirit, life, and body be kept blameless for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who has called you is trustworthy and will carry it out. ❖

DECEMBER 17, 2017 — THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
O CLAVIS DAVID
THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
ACCORDING TO JOHN 1:6–8, 19–28

A man came, sent by God. His name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness to the light, so that everyone might believe through him. He was not the light, he was to bear witness to the light. This was the witness of John, when the Judeans sent to him priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” He declared, he did not deny but declared, “I am not the Christ.” So they asked, “Then are you Elijah?” He replied, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” He answered, “No.” So they said to him, “Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?” So he said, “I am, as Isaiah prophesied: A voice of one that cries in the desert—Prepare a way for the Lord. Make his paths straight!”

Now those who had been sent were Pharisees, and they put this question to him, “Why are you baptizing if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the Prophet?” John answered them, “I baptize

with water; but standing among you—unknown to you—is the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandal.” This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing. ❖

**DECEMBER 24, 2017 – THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
O ORIENS**

THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL 7:1–11, 16

Once King David had settled into his palace and the LORD had granted him rest from all the enemies surrounding him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, “Look, I am living in a cedar-wood palace, while the ark of God is under awnings.” Nathan said to the king, “Go and do whatever you have in mind, for the LORD is with you.”

But that very night, the word of the LORD came to Nathan: “Go and tell my servant David, ‘The LORD says this: Are you to build me a temple for me to live in? I have never lived in a house from the day when I brought the Israelites out of Egypt until today, but have kept traveling with a tent for shelter. In all my travels with all the Israelites, did I say to any of the judges of Israel, whom I had commanded to shepherd my people Israel: Why do you not build me a cedar-wood temple?’

“This is what you must say to my servant David, ‘The LORD Sabaoth says this: I took you from the

pasture, from following the sheep, to be leader of my people

Israel; I have been with you wherever you went; I have got rid of all your enemies for you. I am going to make your fame as great as the fame of the greatest on earth. I am going to provide a place for my people Israel; I shall plant them there, and there they will live and never be disturbed again; nor will they be oppressed by the wicked any more, as they were in former times ever since the time when I instituted judges to govern my people Israel; and I shall grant you rest from all your enemies. The LORD furthermore tells you that he will make you a dynasty. Your dynasty and your sovereignty will ever stand firm before me and your throne be for ever secure.” ❖

DECEMBER 24, 2017 – THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

O ORIENS

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS 16:25–27

Now to the One who can make you strong in accordance with the gospel that I preach and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, in accordance with that mystery which for endless ages was kept secret but now (as the prophets wrote) is revealed, as the eternal God commanded, to be made known to all the nations, so that they obey in faith: to that One, the only wise God, give glory through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. Amen. ❖

DECEMBER 24, 2017 – THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
O ORIENS
THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
ACCORDING TO LUKE 1:26–38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, "Rejoice, you who enjoy God's favor! The Lord is with you." She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, "Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favor. Look! You are to conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end."

Mary said to the angel, "But how can this come about, since I have no knowledge of man?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will cover you with its

shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God.

And I tell you this too: your cousin Elizabeth also, in her old age, has conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.” Mary said, “You see before you the Lord’s servant, let it happen to me as you have said.” And the angel left her. ❖

DECEMBER 25, 2017

CHRISTMAS

THE PROPHET ISAIAH 9:2-7

The people who walked in darkness

have seen a great light;

those who lived in a land of deep darkness--

on them light has shined.

You have multiplied the nation,

you have increased its joy;

they rejoice before you

as with joy at the harvest,

as people exult when dividing plunder.

For the yoke of their burden,

and the bar across their shoulders,

the rod of their oppressor,

you have broken as on the day of Midian.

For all the boots of the tramping warriors

and all the garments rolled in blood

shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

For a child has been born for us,

a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. ❖

DECEMBER 25, 2017

CHRISTMAS

PAUL'S LETTER TO TITUS 2:11-14

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds. ❖

DECEMBER 25, 2017

CHRISTMAS

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

ACCORDING TO LUKE 2:1-20

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be

afraid; for see-- I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he
favors!"

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. ❖

DECEMBER 31, 2017

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

A READING FROM THE PROPHET ISAIAH 61:10-62:3

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring
up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and
praise to spring up before all the nations.

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.

The nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will give.

You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the
LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.



DECEMBER 31, 2017

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

A READING FROM THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS

3:23-25; 4:4-7

Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian.

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God. ❖

DECEMBER 31, 2017

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING
TO JOHN 1:1-18**

In the beginning was the Word: the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things came into being, not one thing came into being except through him. What has come into being in him was life, life that was the light of all humanity; and light shines in darkness, and darkness could not overpower it. A man came, sent by God. His name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness to the light, so that everyone might believe through him. He was not the light, he was to bear witness to the light. The Word was the real light that gives light to everyone; he was coming into the world. He was in the world that had come into being through him, and the world did not recognize him. He came to his own and his own people did not accept him. But to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to those who believed in his name who were born not from human stock or human desire or human will but from God himself. The Word became

flesh, he lived among us, and we saw his glory, the glory that he has from the Father as only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth. John witnesses to him. He proclaims: 'This is the one of whom I said: He who comes after me has passed ahead of me because he existed before me.' Indeed, from his fullness we have, all of us, received -- one gift replacing another, for the Law was given through Moses, grace and truth have come through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; it is the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known. ❖

