

Readings – Twelfth Sunday After Pentecost 20-08-2023

Sentence

Thus says the Lord, 'Maintain justice, and do what is right, for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance be revealed.'

Isaiah 56.1

Collect

God of freedom,
you have broken the tyranny of sin
and sent the Spirit of your Son into our hearts:
give us grace to dedicate our freedom to your service,
that all people may know the glorious liberty of the children of
God; through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Genesis 45: 1-15

Our first reading is taken from Genesis, Chapter 45 beginning at Verse 1

¹ Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, 'Send everyone away from me.' So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. ² And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. ³ Joseph said to his brothers, 'I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?' But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence. ⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, 'Come closer to me.' And they came closer. He said, 'I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵ And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶ For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither ploughing nor harvest. ⁷ God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. ⁸ So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. ⁹ Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, "Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. ¹⁰ You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me,

you and your children and your children's children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. ¹¹ I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.” ¹² And now your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my own mouth that speaks to you. ¹³ You must tell my father how greatly I am honoured in Egypt, and all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here.’ ¹⁴ Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, while Benjamin wept upon his neck. ¹⁵ And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

Hear the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 133

Our Psalm today comes from Psalm 133. I will read one verse, and I invite you to respond with the next verse,

¹ Behold how good and how lovely it is:
when families live together in unity.

² **It is fragrant as oil upon the head, that runs down over the beard: fragrant as oil upon the beard of Aaron, that ran down over the collar of his robe.**

³ It is like a dew of Hermon:
like the dew that falls upon the hill of Zion.

⁴ **For there the Lord has commanded his blessing:
which is life for evermore.**

Romans 11: 13-32

Our second reading is taken from the Letter of Paul to the Romans Chapter 11, beginning at Verse 13

¹³ Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I glorify my ministry

¹⁴ in order to make my own people jealous, and thus save some of them. ¹⁵ For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead!

¹⁶ If the part of the dough offered as first fruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy; and if the root is holy, then the branches also are holy. ¹⁷ But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, a wild olive shoot, were grafted in their place to share the rich root of the olive tree, ¹⁸ do not vaunt yourselves over the branches. If you do vaunt yourselves, remember that it is not you that support the root, but the root that supports you.

¹⁹ You will say, 'Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.' ²⁰ That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand only through faith. So do not become proud, but stand in awe. ²¹ For if God did not spare the natural branches, perhaps he will not spare you. ²² Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity towards those who have fallen, but God's kindness towards you, provided you continue in his kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.

²³ And even those of Israel, if they do not persist in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again.

²⁴ For if you have been cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these natural branches be grafted back into their own olive tree. ²⁵ So that you may not claim to be wiser than you are, brothers and sisters, I want you to understand this mystery: a hardening has come upon part of Israel, until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶ And so all Israel will be saved; as it is written, 'Out of Zion will come the Deliverer; he will banish ungodliness from Jacob.' ²⁷ 'And this is my covenant with them, when I take away their sins.'

²⁸ As regards the gospel they are enemies of God for your sake; but as regards election they are beloved, for the sake of their ancestors; ²⁹ for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. ³⁰ Just as you were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience, ³¹ so they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy.

³² For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.

Hear the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Matthew 15: 21-28

The Lord be with you. **And also, with you.**

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew, Chapter 15, beginning at Verse 21, **Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

²¹ Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. ²² Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, 'Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.' ²³ But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, 'Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.' ²⁴ He answered, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' ²⁵ But she came and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord, help me.' ²⁶ He answered, 'It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.' ²⁷ She said, 'Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.' ²⁸ Then Jesus answered her, 'Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.' And her daughter was healed instantly.

This is the Gospel of the Lord,

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.