

**Readings – Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost
24-09-2023**

Sentence

By grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God. Ephesians 2.8-9

Collect

Loving and righteous God,
your boundless generosity exceeds
all that we can desire or deserve,
and you give to the last worker all you promised to the first.:
liberate us from all jealousy and greed,
that we may be free to love and serve others,
and in your service may find our true reward;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Exodus 16: 2-15

Our first reading is taken from Exodus, Chapter 16 beginning at Verse 2

² The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. ³ The Israelites said to them, 'If only we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.' ⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, 'I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not. ⁵ On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather on other days.' ⁶ So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, 'In the evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, ⁷ and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your complaining against the LORD. For what are we, that you complain against us?' ⁸ And Moses said, 'When the LORD gives you meat to eat in the evening and your fill of bread in the morning, because the LORD has heard the complaining that you utter against him—what are we? Your complaining is not against us but against the LORD.' ⁹ Then Moses said to Aaron, 'Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites, "Draw near to the LORD, for he has heard your complaining.'" ¹⁰ And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked towards the wilderness, and the glory of the LORD appeared in the

cloud. ¹¹ The LORD spoke to Moses and said, ¹² ‘I have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, “At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.” ’ ¹³ In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. ¹⁴ When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. ¹⁵ When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, ‘What is it?’ For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, ‘It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat.

Hear the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 105: 1-6, 37-45

Our Psalm today comes from Psalm 105. I will read one verse, and I invite you to respond with the next verse,

¹ O give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name: tell among the peoples what things he has done.

² **Sing to him, O sing praises: and be telling of all his marvellous works.**

³ Exult in his holy name: and let those that seek the Lord be joyful in heart.

⁴ **Seek the Lord and his strength: O seek his face continually.**

⁵ Call to mind what wonders he has done: his marvellous acts, and the judgements of his mouth,

⁶ **O seed of Abraham his servant: O children of Jacob his chosen one.**

³⁷ He brought Israel out with silver and with gold: and not one among their tribes was seen to stumble.

³⁸ **Egypt was glad at their going: for dread of Israel had fallen upon them.**

³⁹ He spread out a cloud for a covering: and fire to lighten the night.

⁴⁰ **The people asked, and he brought them quails: and satisfied them with the bread from heaven.**

⁴¹ He opened a rock, so that the waters gushed: and ran in the parched land like a river.

⁴² **For he had remembered his holy word: that he gave to Abraham his servant.**

⁴³ So he led out his people with rejoicing: his chosen ones with shouts of joy;

44 He gave them the land of the nations: and they took possession of the fruit for which other peoples had toiled,

45 So that they might keep his statutes: and faithfully obey his laws. O praise the Lord.

Philippians 1

Our second reading is taken from the Letter of Paul to the Philippians Chapter 1, beginning at Verse 1

¹ Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: ² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ³ I thank my God every time I remember you, ⁴ constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, ⁵ because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶ I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷ It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel. ⁸ For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. ⁹ And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight ¹⁰ to help you to determine what is best, so that on the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, ¹¹ having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God. ¹² I want you to know, beloved, that what has happened to me has actually helped to spread the gospel, ¹³ so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to everyone else that my imprisonment is for Christ; ¹⁴ and most of the brothers and sisters, having been made confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, dare to speak the word with greater boldness and without fear. ¹⁵ Some proclaim Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from goodwill. ¹⁶ These proclaim Christ out of love, knowing that I

have been put here for the defence of the gospel; ¹⁷ the others proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but intending to increase my suffering in my imprisonment. ¹⁸ What does it matter? Just this, that Christ is proclaimed in every way, whether out of false motives or true; and in that I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, ¹⁹ for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will result in my deliverance. ²⁰ It is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be put to shame in any way, but that by my speaking with all boldness, Christ will be exalted now as always in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹ For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labour for me; and I do not know which I prefer. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; ²⁴ but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵ Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶ so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again. ²⁷ Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸ and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹ For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well— ³⁰ since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Hear the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Matthew 20: 1-16

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

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew, Chapter 20, beginning at Verse 1, **Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

¹ 'For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. ² After agreeing with the labourers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the market-place; ⁴ and he said to them, "You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right." So they went. ⁵ When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶ And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, "Why are you standing here idle all day?" ⁷ They said to him, "Because no one has hired us." He said to them, "You also go into the vineyard." ⁸ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, "Call the labourers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first." ⁹ When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. ¹⁰ Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. ¹¹ And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹² saying, "These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of

the day and the scorching heat.” ¹³ But he replied to one of them, “Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? ¹⁴ Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?” ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first will be last.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord,

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.