

Readings for the Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost –

1st September 2024

Sentence

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

James 1.17

Collect

Cleanse our consciences, O Lord,
and enlighten our hearts
through the daily presence of your Son Jesus Christ,
that when he comes in glory to be our judge
we may be found undefiled and acceptable in his sight;
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

1st Reading – Song of Songs 2.8-13

Our first reading is taken from the Song of Songs,
Chapter 2 beginning at verse 8.

⁸ The voice of my beloved!

Look, he comes,
leaping upon the mountains,
bounding over the hills.

⁹ My beloved is like a gazelle
or a young stag.

Look, there he stands
behind our wall,
gazing in at the windows,
looking through the lattice.

¹⁰ My beloved speaks and says to me:

‘Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away;

¹¹ for now the winter is past,
the rain is over and gone.

¹² The flowers appear on the earth;
the time of singing has come,
and the voice of the turtle-dove
is heard in our land.

¹³ The fig tree puts forth its figs,
and the vines are in blossom;
they give forth fragrance.

Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away.

Hear the word of the Lord, ***thanks be to God.***

Psalm 45.1-2, 6-9

Our Psalm today comes from Psalm 45. I will read one verse, and I invite you to respond with the next verse,

¹ My heart is astir with fine phrases,
I make my song for a king:
my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.

² **You are the fairest of men,
grace flows from your lips:
therefore has God blessed you for ever and ever.**

⁶ Your throne is the throne of God, it endures for ever:
and the sceptre of your kingdom is a righteous sceptre.

⁷ **You have loved righteousness and hated evil:
therefore God, your God, has anointed you
with the oil of gladness above your fellows.**

⁸ All your garments are fragrant
with myrrh, aloes and cassia:
music from ivory palaces makes you glad.

⁹ **Kings' daughters are among your noble women:
the queen is at your right hand in gold of Ophir.**

2nd Reading – James 1.17-27

Our second reading is taken from the Letter of James, Chapter 1, beginning at verse 17

¹⁷ Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. ¹⁸ In fulfilment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures. ¹⁹ You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰ for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. ²¹ Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls. ²² But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. ²³ For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; ²⁴ for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. ²⁵ But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing. ²⁶ If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. ²⁷ Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

Hear the word of the Lord, ***thanks be to God.***

Gospel – Mark 7.1-8, 7.14-23

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

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark, chapter 7, beginning at verse 1. **Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

¹ Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, ² they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. ³ (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; ⁴ and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) ⁵ So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, ‘Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?’ ⁶ He said to them, ‘Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, “This people honours me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; ⁷ in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.” ⁸ You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition. ¹⁴ Then he called the crowd again and said to them, ‘Listen to me, all of you, and understand: ¹⁵ there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile. ¹⁷ When he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about the parable. ¹⁸ He said to them, ‘Then do you also fail to understand? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile, ¹⁹ since it enters, not the heart but the stomach, and goes out into the sewer?’ (Thus he declared all foods clean.) ²⁰ And he said, ‘It is what comes out of a person that defiles. ²¹ For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, ²² adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. ²³ All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.’

This is the gospel of the Lord, ***praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.***