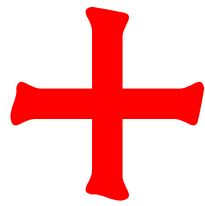


L ECTIONARY READINGS FOR YEAR "C"
THE REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY (TRACK 2)
USING TRANSLATIONS FROM THE
NEW JERUSALEM BIBLE,
THE NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION,
AND A FEW ADDITIONAL SOURCES
TO MAKE THE READINGS CLEARER

USED IN THE YEAR OF GRACE 2016

ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA EPISCOPAL CHURCH
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA



JANUARY 3, 2016

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

THE PROPHET JEREMIAH 31:7-14

For the LORD says this: Shout with joy for Jacob! Hail the chief of nations! Proclaim! Praise! Shout, 'The LORD has saved his people, the remnant of Israel!' Watch, I shall bring them back from the land of the north and gather them in from the far ends of the earth. With them, the blind and the lame, women with child, women in labor, all together: a mighty throng will return here! In tears they will return, in prayer I shall lead them. I shall guide them to streams of water, by a smooth path where they will not stumble. For I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born son. Listen, nations, to the word of the LORD. On the farthest coasts and islands proclaim it, say, 'He who scattered Israel is gathering him, will guard him as a shepherd guarding his flock.' For the LORD has ransomed Jacob, rescued him from a hand stronger than his own. They will come, shouting for joy on the heights of Zion, thronging towards the LORD's lavish gifts, for wheat, new wine and oil, sheep and cattle; they will be like a well-watered garden, they will sorrow no more. The young girl will then take pleasure in the dance, and young men and old alike; I shall change their mourning into gladness, comfort them, give them joy after their

troubles; I shall refresh my priests with rich food, and my people will gorge themselves on my lavish gifts, the LORD declares. ❖

JANUARY 3, 2016

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

EPHESIANS 1:3-6,15-19A

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all the spiritual blessings of heaven in Christ. Thus he chose us in Christ before the world was made to be holy and faultless before him in love, marking us out for himself beforehand, to be adopted sons, through Jesus Christ. Such was his purpose and good pleasure, to the praise of the glory of his grace, his free gift to us in the Beloved. That is why I, having once heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus, and your love for all God's holy people, 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 him. May he enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what hope his call holds for you, how rich is the glory of the heritage he offers among his holy people, and how extraordinarily great is the power that he has exercised for us believers. ❖

JANUARY 3, 2016

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

MATTHEW 2:13-15,19-23

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.” When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.” Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He will be called a Nazorean.” ❖

JANUARY 10, 2016

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST

THE PROPHET ISAIAH 43:1–7

And now, thus says the LORD, who created you, Jacob, who formed you, Israel: Do not be afraid, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name, you are mine. Should you pass through the waters, I shall be with you; or through rivers, they will not swallow you up. Should you walk through fire, you will not suffer, and the flame will not burn you. For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I have given Egypt for your ransom, Cush and Saba in exchange for you. Since I regard you as precious, since you are honored and I love you, I therefore give people in exchange for you, and nations in return for your life. Do not be afraid, for I am with you. I shall bring your offspring from the east, and gather you from the west. To the north I shall say, “Give them up!” and to the south, “Do not hold them back!” Bring back my sons from far away, and my daughters from the remotest part of the earth, everyone who bears my name, whom I have created for my glory, whom I have formed, whom I have made. ❖

JANUARY 10, 2016

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 8:14-17

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, and they went down there and prayed for them to receive the Holy Spirit, for as yet the Spirit had not come down on any of them: they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. ❖

JANUARY 10, 2016

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 3:15–17, 21–22**

A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to wonder whether John might be the Christ, so John declared before them all, “I baptize you with water, but someone is coming who is more powerful than me, and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.”

Now it happened that when all the people had been baptized and while Jesus after his own baptism was at prayer, heaven opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in a physical form, like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.” ❖

JANUARY 17, 2016

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

THE PROPHET ISAIAH 62:1–5

About Zion I will not be silent, about Jerusalem I shall not rest until saving justice dawns for her like a bright light and her salvation like a blazing torch. The nations will then see your saving justice, and all kings and queens your glory, and you will be called a new name which the LORD's mouth will reveal. You will be a crown of splendor in the LORD's hand, a princely diadem in the hand of your God. No more will you be known as 'Forsaken' or your country be known as 'Desolation'; instead, you will be called 'My Delight is in her' and your country 'The Wedded'; for the LORD will take delight in you and your country will have its wedding. Like a young man marrying a virgin, your rebuilders will wed you, and as the bridegroom rejoices in his bride, so will your God rejoice in you. ❖

JANUARY 17, 2016

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS 12:1–11

About the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I want you to be quite certain. You remember that, when you were pagans, you were irresistibly drawn to inarticulate heathen gods. Because of that, I want to make it quite clear to you that no one who says “A curse on Jesus” can be speaking in the Spirit of God, and nobody is able to say, “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit.

There are many different gifts, but it is always the same Spirit; there are many different ways of serving, but it is always the same Lord. There are many different forms of activity, but in everybody it is the same God who is at work in them all. The particular manifestation of the Spirit granted to each one is to be used for the general good. To one is given from the Spirit the gift of utterance expressing wisdom; to another the gift of utterance expressing knowledge, in accordance with the same Spirit; to another, faith, from the same Spirit; and to another, the gifts of healing, through this one Spirit; to another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, the power of

distinguishing spirits; to one, the gift of different tongues and to another, the interpretation of tongues. But at work in all these is one and the same Spirit, distributing them at will to each individual. ❖

JANUARY 17, 2016

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO JOHN 2:1–11

On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee. The mother of Jesus was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited. And they ran out of wine, since the wine provided for the feast had all been used, and the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” Jesus said, “Woman, what do you want from me? My hour has not come yet.” His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” There were six stone water jars standing there, meant for the customary purification rituals: each could hold twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, “Fill the jars with water,” and they filled them to the brim. Then he said to them, “Draw some out now and take it to the steward of the feast.” They did this; the steward tasted the water, and it had turned into wine. Having no idea where it came from — though the servants who had drawn the water knew — the steward of the feast called the bridegroom and said, “Everyone serves good wine first and the worse wine when the guests are well wined; but you have kept the best wine till now.” This was the first of Jesus’ signs: it was at Cana in Galilee. He revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him. ❖

JANUARY 24, 2016

THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

THE PROPHET NEHEMIAH 8:1–3, 5-6, 8–10

All the people gathered as one body in the square in front of the Water Gate, and asked the scribe Ezra to bring the Book of the Law of Moses which the LORD had prescribed for Israel. Accordingly, on the first day of the seventh month, the priest Ezra brought the Law before the assembly, consisting of men, women and all those old enough to understand. In the square in front of the Water Gate, in the presence of the men and women, and of those old enough to understand, he read from the book from dawn till noon; all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law. In full view of all the people — since he stood higher than them all — Ezra opened the book; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. Then Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people raised their hands and answered, “Amen! Amen!” then they bowed down and, face to the ground, prostrated themselves before the LORD. Ezra read from the book of the Law of God, translating and giving the sense; so the reading was understood.

Then His Excellency Nehemiah and the priest-scribe Ezra and the Levites who were instructing the people said to all the people, “Today is sacred to the LORD your God. Do not be mournful, do not weep.” For the people were all in tears as they listened to the words of the Law.

He then said, “You may go; eat what is rich, drink what is sweet and send a helping to the one who has nothing prepared. For today is sacred to our God. Do not be sad: the joy of the LORD is your stronghold.” ❖

JANUARY 24, 2016

THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS 12:12–31A

For as with the human body, which is a unity, although it has many parts — all the parts of the body, though many, still making up one single body — so it is with Christ. We were baptized into one body in a single Spirit, Israelites as well as Greeks, slaves as well as free men, and we were all given the same Spirit to drink. And indeed the body consists not of one member but of many. If the foot were to say, “I am not a hand and so I do not belong to the body,” it does not belong to the body any the less for that. Or if the ear were to say, “I am not an eye, and so I do not belong to the body,” that would not stop its belonging to the body. If the whole body were just an eye, how would there be any hearing? If the whole body were hearing, how would there be any smelling?

As it is, God has put all the separate parts into the body as he chose. If they were all the same part, how could it be a body? As it is, the parts are many but the body is one. The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” and nor can the head say to the feet, “I have no need of you.”

What is more, it is precisely the parts of the body that seem to be the weakest which are the indispensable ones. It is the

parts of the body which we consider least dignified that we surround with the greatest dignity; and our less presentable parts are given greater respect, which our presentable parts do not need. God has composed the body so that greater dignity is given to the parts which were without it, and so that there may not be disagreements inside the body but each part may be equally concerned for all the others. If one part is hurt, all the parts share its pain. And if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy.

Now Christ's body is yourselves, each of you with a part to play in the whole. And those whom God has appointed in the Church are, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers; after them, miraculous powers, then gifts of healing, helpful acts, guidance, various kinds of tongues. Are all of them apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all miracle-workers? Do all have the gifts of healing? Do all of them speak in tongues and all interpret them? Set your mind on the higher gifts. ❖

JANUARY 24, 2016

THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 4:14–21**

Jesus, with the power of the Spirit in him, returned to Galilee; and his reputation spread throughout the countryside. He taught in their synagogues and everyone glorified him.

He came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day as he usually did. He stood up to read, and they handed him the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Unrolling the scroll he found the place where it is written: “The spirit of the Lord is on me, and has anointed me to bring the good news to the afflicted. The spirit of the Lord has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives, sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim a year of favor from the Lord.”

He then rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the assistant and sat down. And all eyes in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to speak to them, “This text is being fulfilled today even while you are listening.” ❖

JANUARY 31, 2016

THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

THE PROPHET JEREMIAH 1:4–10

The word of the LORD came to me, saying: “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; you came to birth I consecrated you; I appointed you as prophet to the nations.” I then said, “Ah, ah, ah, LORD; you see, I do not know how to speak: I am only a child!” But the LORD replied, “Do not say, ‘I am only a child,’ for you must go to all to whom I send you and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of confronting them, for I am with you to rescue you, the LORD declares.” Then the LORD stretched out his hand and touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me: “There! I have put my words into your mouth. Look, today I have set you over the nations and kingdoms, to uproot and to knock down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.” ❖

JANUARY 31, 2016

THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS 13:1–13

Though I command languages both human and angelic — if I speak without love, I am no more than a gong booming or a cymbal clashing. And though I have the power of prophecy, to penetrate all mysteries and knowledge, and though I have all the faith necessary to move mountains — if I am without love, I am nothing. Though I should give away to the poor all that I possess, and even give up my body to be burned — if I am without love, it will do me no good whatever.

Love is always patient and kind; love is never jealous; love is not boastful or conceited, it is never rude and never seeks its own advantage, it does not take offence or store up grievances. Love does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but finds its joy in the truth. It is always ready to make allowances, to trust, to hope and to endure whatever comes.

Love never comes to an end. But if there are prophecies, they will be done away with; if tongues, they will fall silent; and if knowledge, it will be done away with. For we know only imperfectly, and we prophesy imperfectly; but once perfection comes, all imperfect things will be done away with. When I was a child, I used to talk like a child, and see

things as a child does, and think like a child; but now that I have become an adult, I have finished with all childish ways. Now we see only reflections in a mirror, mere riddles, but then we shall be seeing face to face. Now I can know only imperfectly; but then I shall know just as fully as I am myself known.

As it is, these remain: faith, hope and love, the three of them; and the greatest of them is love. ❖

JANUARY 31, 2016

THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 4:21–30**

Then Jesus began to speak to the members of the synagogue, “This text is being fulfilled today even while you are listening.” And he won the approval of all, and they were astonished by the gracious words that came from his lips.

They said, “This is Joseph’s son, surely?” But he replied, “No doubt you will quote me the saying, ‘Physician, heal yourself,’ and tell me, ‘We have heard all that happened in Capernaum, do the same here in your own country.’” And he went on, “In truth I tell you, no prophet is ever accepted in his own country. There were many widows in Israel, I can assure you, in Elijah’s day, when heaven remained shut for three years and six months and a great famine raged throughout the land, but Elijah was not sent to any one of these: he was sent to a widow at Zarephath, a town in Sidonia. And in the prophet Elisha’s time there were many suffering from virulent skin-diseases in Israel, but none of these was cured — only Naaman the Syrian.”

When they heard this everyone in the synagogue was enraged. They sprang to their feet and hustled him out of the town; and they took him up to the brow of the hill their town was built on, intending to throw him off the cliff, but he passed straight through the crowd and walked away. ❖

FEBRUARY 7, 2016

THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

EXODUS 34:29–35

When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hands, as he was coming down the mountain, Moses did not know that the skin of his face was radiant because he had been talking to the LORD. And when Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, the skin on his face was so radiant that they were afraid to go near him. But Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the leaders of the community rejoined him, and Moses talked to them, after which all the Israelites came closer, and he passed on to them all the orders that the LORD had given to him on Mount Sinai. Once Moses had finished speaking to them, he put a veil over his face. Whenever Moses went into the LORD's presence to speak with the LORD, he took the veil off until he came out. And when he came out, he would tell the Israelites what orders he had been given, and the Israelites would see Moses' face radiant. Then Moses would put the veil back over his face until he went in to speak to the LORD next time. ❖

FEBRUARY 7, 2016

THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS 3:(12 -16) 17-4:2

[With a hope like this, we can speak with complete fearlessness; not like Moses who put a veil over his face so that the Israelites should not watch the end of what was transitory. But their minds were closed; indeed, until this very day, the same veil remains over the reading of the Old Testament: it is not lifted, for only in Christ is it done away with. As it is, to this day, whenever Moses is read, their hearts are covered with a veil, and this veil will not be taken away till they turn to the Lord.]

Now the Lord is the Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And all of us, with our unveiled faces like mirrors reflecting the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the image that we reflect in brighter and brighter glory; this is the working of the Lord who is the Spirit.

Such by God's mercy is our ministry, and therefore we do not waver but have renounced all shameful secrecy. It is not our way to be devious, or to falsify the word of God; instead, in God's sight we commend ourselves to every human being with a conscience by showing the truth openly. ❖

FEBRUARY 7, 2016

THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO

THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE 9:28–36, (37–43)

Now about eight days after this had been said, Jesus took with him Peter, John and James and went up the mountain to pray. And it happened that, as he was praying, the aspect his face was changed and his clothing became sparkling white. And suddenly there were two men talking to him; they were Moses and Elijah appearing in glory, and they were speaking of his passing that he was to accomplish in Jerusalem. Peter and his companions were heavy with sleep, but they woke up and saw his glory and the two men standing with him. As these were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is wonderful for us to be here; so let us make three shelters, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” He did not know what he was saying.

As he was saying this, a cloud came and covered them with shadow; and when they went into the cloud the disciples were afraid. And a voice came from the cloud saying, “This is my Son, the Chosen One. Listen to him.” And after the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. The disciples kept silence and, at that time, told no one what they had seen.

[Now it happened that on the following day when they were coming down from the mountain a large crowd came to meet him. And suddenly a man in the crowd cried out. “Master,” he said, “I implore you to look at my son: he is my only child. A spirit will suddenly take hold of him, and all at once it gives a sudden cry and throws the boy into convulsions with foaming at the mouth; it is slow to leave him, but when it does, it leaves the boy worn out. I begged your disciples to drive it out, and they could not.”

In reply Jesus said, “Faithless and perverse generation! How much longer must I be among you and put up with you? Bring your son. Even while the boy was coming, the devil threw him to the ground in convulsions. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit and cured the boy and gave him back to his father, and everyone was awestruck by the greatness of God.] ❖

FEBRUARY 14, 2016
THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT
DEUTERONOMY 26:1–11

When you have entered the country which the LORD your God is giving you as heritage, when you have taken possession of it and are living in it, you must set aside the first-fruits of all the produce of the soil raised by you in your country, given you by the LORD your God. You must put these in a basket and go to the place that the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. You will go to the priest then in office and say to him, “Today I declare to the LORD my God that I have reached the country which the LORD swore to our ancestors that he would give us.”

The priest will then take the basket from your hand and lay it before the altar of the LORD your God. In the presence of the LORD your God, you will then pronounce these words: “My father was a wandering Aramaean, who went down to Egypt with a small group of men, and stayed there, until he there became a great, powerful and numerous nation. The Egyptians ill-treated us, they oppressed us and inflicted harsh slavery on us.

But we called on the LORD, God of our ancestors. The LORD heard our voice and saw our misery, our toil and our oppression; and the LORD brought us out of Egypt with mighty hand and outstretched arm, with great terror, and with signs and wonders. The LORD brought us here and has given us this country, a country flowing with milk and honey. Hence, I now bring the first-fruits of the soil that you, the LORD, have given me.”

You will then lay them before the LORD your God, and prostrate yourself in the presence of the LORD your God. You must then rejoice in all the good things that the LORD your God has bestowed on you and your family — you, the Levite and the foreigner living with you. ❖

FEBRUARY 14, 2016

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS 10:8B-13

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 Israelite 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.



FEBRUARY 14, 2016

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 4:1–13**

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert, for forty days being put to the test by the devil. During that time he ate nothing and at the end he was hungry. Then the devil said to him, “If you are Son of God, tell this stone to turn into a loaf.” But Jesus replied, “Scripture says: People live not on bread alone.”

Then leading him to a height, the devil showed him in a moment of time all the kingdoms of the world and said to him, “I will give you all this power and their splendor, for it has been handed over to me, for me to give it to anyone I choose. Do homage, then, to me, and it shall all be yours.” But Jesus answered him, “Scripture says: You must do homage to the Lord your God, him alone you must serve.”

Then he led him to Jerusalem and set him on the parapet of the Temple. “If you are Son of God,” he said to him, “throw yourself down from here, for scripture says: He has given his angels orders about you, to guard you, and again: They will carry you in their arms in case you trip over a stone.”

But Jesus answered him, “Scripture says: Do not put the Lord your God to the test.” Having exhausted every way of putting him to the test, the devil left him, until the opportune moment. ❖

FEBRUARY 21, 2016

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

GENESIS 15:1–12, 17–18

After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, “Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.”

But Abram said, “O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” And Abram said, “You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir.” But the word of the Lord came to him, “This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir.” He brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness.

Then he said to him, “I am the Lord who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess.” But he said, “O Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?” He said to him, “Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.” He brought him all these

and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him.

When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, ❖

FEBRUARY 21, 2016

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS 3:17–4:1

Brothers and sisters, be united in imitating me. Keep your eyes fixed on those who act according to the example you have from me. For there are so many people of whom I have often warned you, and now I warn you again with tears in my eyes, who behave like the enemies of Christ's cross. They are destined to be lost; their god is the stomach; they glory in what they should think shameful, since their minds are set on earthly things. But our homeland is in heaven and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transfigure the wretched body of ours into the mould of his glorious body, through the working of the power which he has, even to bring all things under his mastery. So then, my brothers and sisters, my dear friends whom I miss so much, my joy and my crown, hold firm in the Lord, dear friends. ❖

FEBRUARY 21, 2016

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 13:31–35

Just at this time some Pharisees came up. “Go away,” they said. “Leave this place, because Herod means to kill you.” Jesus replied, “You may go and give that fox this message: ‘Look! Today and tomorrow I drive out devils and heal, and on the third day I attain my end. But for today and tomorrow and the next day I must go on, since it would not be right for a prophet to die outside Jerusalem.’”

“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you that kill the prophets and stone those who are sent to you! How often have I longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you refused! Look! Your house will be left to you. Yes, I promise you, you shall not see me till the time comes when you are saying: Blessed is he who is coming in the name of the Lord!” ❖

FEBRUARY 28, 2016

THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

EXODUS 3:1-15

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up." When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." He said further, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Then the LORD said, "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the

Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.” But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” He said, “I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain.”

But Moses said to God, “If I come to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” God said to Moses, “I AM Who I AM.” He said further, “Thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” God also said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to 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 forever, and this my title for all generations.” ❖

FEBRUARY 28, 2016

THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS 10:1-13

I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play.” We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall.

No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it. ❖

FEBRUARY 28, 2016

THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 13:1-9**

There were some present who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. He asked them, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them--do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.”

Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So he said to the gardener, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?’ He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’” ❖

MARCH 6, 2016

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

JOSHUA 5:9–12

The LORD then said to Joshua, “Today I have taken the shame of Egypt away from you.” Hence, the place has been called Gilgal ever since.

The Israelites pitched their camp at Gilgal and kept the Passover there on the fourteenth day of the month, at evening, in the plain of Jericho. On the very next day after the Passover, they ate what the land produced, unleavened bread and roasted ears of corn. The manna stopped the day after they had eaten the produce of the land. The Israelites from that year onwards ate the produce of Canaan and had no more manna. ❖

MARCH 6, 2016

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

THE SECOND LETTER OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS 5:16–21

From now onwards, then, we will not consider anyone by human standards: even if we were once familiar with Christ according to human standards, we do not know him in that way any longer. So for anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation: the old order is gone and a new being is there to see. It is all God's work; we were reconciled to God through Christ and God gave us the ministry of reconciliation. I mean, God was in Christ reconciling the world to God, not holding anyone's faults against them, but entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

So we are ambassadors for Christ; it is as though God was urging you through us, and in the name of Christ we appeal to you to be reconciled to God. For our sake God made the sinless one a victim for sin, so that in him we might become the uprightness of God. ❖

MARCH 6, 2016

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 15:1–3, 11B–32**

The tax collectors and sinners, however, were all crowding round to listen to Jesus, and the Pharisees and scribes complained saying, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.” So he told them this parable:

“There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, let me have the share of the estate that will come to me.’ So the father divided the property between them. A few days later, the younger son got together everything he had and left for a distant country where he squandered his money on a life of debauchery.

“When he had spent it all, that country experienced a severe famine, and now he began to feel the pinch; so he hired himself out to one of the local inhabitants who put him on his farm to feed the pigs. And he would willingly have filled himself with the husks the pigs were eating but no one would let him have them. Then he came to his senses and said, ‘How many of my father’s hired men have all the food they want and more, and here am I dying of hunger! I will leave this place and go to my father and say: Father, I have sinned

against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired men.’ So he left the place and went back to his father.

“While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with pity. He ran to the boy, clasped him in his arms and kissed him. Then his son said, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring out the best robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the calf we have been fattening, and kill it; we will celebrate by having a feast, because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found.’ And they began to celebrate.

“Now the elder son was out in the fields, and on his way back, as he drew near the house, he could hear music and dancing. Calling one of the servants he asked what it was all about. The servant told him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf because he has got him back safe and sound.’ He was angry then and refused to go in, and his father came out and began to urge him to come in; but he retorted to his father, ‘All these years I have slaved for you and never once disobeyed any orders of yours, yet you never offered me so much as a little goat for me to

celebrate with my friends. But, for this son of yours, when he comes back after swallowing up your property — he and his loose women — you kill the fatted calf.’

“The father said, ‘my son, you are with me always and all I have is yours. But it was only right we should celebrate and rejoice, because your brother here was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found.’” ❖

MARCH 6, 2016

THE FEAST OF ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA (TRANSFERRED)

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.” ❖

MARCH 6, 2016

THE FEAST OF ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA (TRANSFERRED)

PAUL'S LETTER 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. ❖

MARCH 6, 2016

THE FEAST OF ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA (TRANSFERRED)

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
JOHN 15:7-17**

I have loved you just as the Father has loved me: Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love.

I have told you this so that my own joy may be in you and your joy may be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you. You can have no greater love than to lay down your life for your friends. You are my friends, if you do what I command you.

I shall no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know what the master is doing; I call you friends, because I shared with you everything I have learned from my Father. ❖

MARCH 6, 2016

THE FEAST OF ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA (TRANSFERRED)

A READING FROM ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA THE LIFE OF MOSES

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 13, 2016

THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

THE PROPHET ISAIAH 43:16–21

Thus says the LORD, who made a way through the sea, a path in the raging waters, who led out chariot and horse together with an army of picked troops: they lay down never to rise again, they were snuffed out, put out like a wick. No need to remember past events, no need to think about what was done before.

Look, I am doing something new, now it emerges; can you not see it? Yes, I am making a road in the desert and rivers in wastelands. The wild animals will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches. For I give water in the desert and rivers on the wastelands for my people, my chosen one, to drink; the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise. ❖

MARCH 13, 2016

THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

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

If anyone does claim to rely on them, 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. ❖

MARCH 13, 2016

THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
JOHN 12:1–8**

Six days before the Passover, Jesus went to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom he had raised from the dead. They gave a dinner for him there; Martha waited on them and Lazarus was among those at table. Mary brought in a pound of very costly ointment, pure nard, and with it anointed the feet of Jesus, wiping them with her hair; the house was filled with the scent of the ointment. Then Judas Iscariot — one of his disciples, the man who was to betray him — said, “Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred silver pieces and the money given to the poor?” He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he was in charge of the common fund and used to help himself to the contents. So Jesus said, “Leave her alone; let her keep it for the day of my burial. You have the poor with you always, you will not always have me.” ❖

READINGS FOR HOLY WEEK ARE IN ANOTHER BOOK

MARCH 27, 2016

PASCHA

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 10:34-43

Then Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ--he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name." ❖

MARCH 27, 2016

PASCHA

1 CORINTHIANS 15:19-26

If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. ❖

MARCH 27, 2016

PASCHA

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 24:1-12**

On the first day of the week, at early dawn, the women who had come with Jesus from Galilee came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again." Then they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened. ❖

APRIL 3, 2016

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 5:27–32

When they had brought the apostles in to face the Sanhedrin, the high priest demanded an explanation. “We gave you a strong warning,” he said, “not to preach in this name, and what have you done? You have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and seem determined to fix the guilt for this man’s death on us.” In reply Peter and the apostles said, “Obedience to God comes before obedience to men; it was the God of our ancestors who raised up Jesus, whom you executed by hanging on a tree. By his own right hand God has now raised him up to be leader and Saviour, to give repentance and forgiveness of sins through him to Israel. We are witnesses to this, we and the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him.” ❖

APRIL 3, 2016

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE REVELATION OF JOHN 1:4–8

John, to the seven churches of Asia: grace and peace to you from the one who is, who was, and who is to come, from the seven spirits who are before God's throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the First-born from the dead, the highest of earthly kings. He loves us and has washed away our sins with his blood, and made us a Kingdom of Priests to serve his God and Father; to him, then, be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen. Look, he is coming on the clouds; everyone will see him, even those who pierced him, and all the races of the earth will mourn over him. Indeed this shall be so. Amen. "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, who is, who was, and who is to come, the Almighty. ❖

APRIL 3, 2016

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 God has 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 10, 2016

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 9:1–6, (7–20)

Meanwhile Saul was still breathing threats to slaughter the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest and asked for letters addressed to the synagogues in Damascus, that would authorize him to arrest and take to Jerusalem any followers of the Way, men or women, that he might find.

It happened that while he was traveling to Damascus and approaching the city, suddenly a light from heaven shone all round him. He fell to the ground, and then he heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" "Who are you, Lord?" he asked, and the answer came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. Get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you are to do."

[Those traveling with Saul stood there speechless, for though they heard the voice they could see no one. Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing at all, and they had to lead him into Damascus by the hand. For three days he was without his sight and took neither food nor drink.

There was a disciple in Damascus called Ananias, and he had a vision in which the Lord said to him, “Ananias!” When he replied, “Here I am, Lord,” the Lord said, “Get up and go to Straight Street and ask at the house of Judas for someone called Saul, who comes from Tarsus. At this moment he is praying, and has seen a man called Ananias coming in and laying hands on him to give him back his sight.”

But in response, Ananias said, “Lord, I have heard from many people about this man and all the harm he has been doing to your holy people in Jerusalem. He has come here with a warrant from the chief priests to arrest everybody who invokes your name.” The Lord replied, “Go, for this man is my chosen instrument to bring my name before gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; I myself will show him how much he must suffer for my name.” Then Ananias went. He entered the house, and laid his hands on Saul and said, “Brother Saul, I have been sent by the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, so that you may recover your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” It was as though scales fell away from his eyes and immediately he was able to see again. So he got up and was baptized, and after taking some food he regained his strength.

After he had spent only a few days with the disciples in Damascus, he began preaching in the synagogues, “Jesus is the Son of God.”] ❖

APRIL 10, 2016

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE REVELATION OF JOHN 5:11–14

In my vision, I heard the sound of an immense number of angels gathered round the throne and the living creatures and the elders; there were ten thousand times ten thousand of them and thousands upon thousands, loudly chanting: “Worthy is the Lamb that was sacrificed to receive power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory and blessing.”

Then I heard all the living things in creation — everything that lives in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and in the sea, crying: “To the One seated on the throne and to the Lamb, be all praise, honor, glory and power, for ever and ever.”

And the four living creatures said, “Amen” and the elders prostrated themselves to worship. ❖

APRIL 10, 2016

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
JOHN 21:1–19**

Later on, Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples. It was by the Sea of Tiberias, and it happened like this: Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee and two more of his disciples were together. Simon Peter said, “I’m going fishing.” The disciples replied, “We’ll come with you.” They went out and got into the boat but caught nothing that night.

When it was already light, there stood Jesus on the shore, though the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. Jesus called out, “Haven’t you caught anything, friends?” And when they answered, “No,” he said, “Throw the net out to starboard and you’ll find some thing.” So they threw the net out and could not haul it in because of the quantity of fish. The disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord.” At these words, “It is the Lord,” Simon Peter tied his outer garment round him (for he had nothing on) and jumped into the water. The other disciples came on in the boat, towing the net with the fish; they were only about a hundred yards from land.

As soon as they came ashore they saw that there was some bread there and a charcoal fire with fish cooking on it. Jesus said, "Bring some of the fish you have just caught." Simon Peter went aboard and dragged the net ashore, full of big fish, one hundred and fifty-three of them; and in spite of there being so many the net was not broken. Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples was bold enough to ask, "Who are you?" They knew quite well it was the Lord. Jesus then stepped forward, took the bread and gave it to them, and the same with the fish. This was the third time that Jesus revealed himself to the disciples after rising from the dead.

When they had eaten, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these others do?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He replied, "Yes, Lord, you know I love you." Jesus said to him, "Look after my sheep." Then he said to him a third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt that he asked him a third time, "Do you love me?" and said, "Lord, you know everything; you know I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep.

“In all truth I tell you, when you were young you put on your own belt and walked where you liked; but when you grow old you will stretch out your hands, and somebody else will put a belt round you and take you where you would rather not go.”

In these words he indicated the kind of death by which Peter would give glory to God. After this he said, “Follow me.” ❖

APRIL 17, 2016

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 9:36–43

At Jaffa there was a disciple called Tabitha, or in Greek, Dorcas, who never tired of doing good or giving to those in need. But it happened that at this time she became ill and died, and they washed her and laid her out in an upper room. Lydda is not far from Jaffa, so when the disciples heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to urge him, “Come to us without delay.”

Peter went back with them immediately, and on his arrival they took him to the upper room, where all the widows stood round him in tears, showing him tunics and other clothes Dorcas had made when she was with them. Peter sent everyone out of the room and knelt down and prayed. Then he turned to the dead woman and said, “Tabitha, stand up.” She opened her eyes, looked at Peter and sat up. Peter helped her to her feet, then he called in the members of the congregation and widows and showed them she was alive. The whole of Jaffa heard about it and many believed in the Lord. Peter stayed on some time in Jaffa, lodging with a leather-tanner called Simon. ❖

APRIL 17, 2016
THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
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 hands. They shouted in a loud voice, “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 God day and night in God's sanctuary; and the One who sits on the throne will spread a 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." ❖

APRIL 17, 2016

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
JOHN 10:22–30

It was the time of the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem.

It was winter, and Jesus was in the Temple walking up and down in the Portico of Solomon. The people gathered round him and said, “How much longer are you going to keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us openly.” Jesus replied: I have told you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father’s name are my witness; but you do not believe, because you are no sheep of mine. The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life; they will never be lost and no one will ever steal them from my hand. The Father, for what he has given me, is greater than anyone, and no one can steal anything from the Father’s hand. The Father and I are one.” ❖

APRIL 24, 2016

THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 11:1–18

The apostles and the brothers and sisters in Judea heard that gentiles too had accepted the word of God, and when Peter came up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers protested to him and said, “So you have been visiting the uncircumcised and eating with them!” Peter in reply gave them the details point by point, “One day, when I was in the town of Jaffa,” he began, “I fell into a trance as I was praying and had a vision of something like a big sheet being let down from heaven by its four corners. This sheet came right down beside me. I looked carefully into it and saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, reptiles, and birds of heaven. Then I heard a voice that said to me, ‘Now, Peter, kill and eat!’ But I answered, ‘Certainly not, Lord; nothing profane or unclean has ever crossed my lips.’ And a second time the voice spoke from heaven, ‘What God has made clean, you have no right to call profane.’ This was repeated three times, before the whole of it was drawn up to heaven again.

“Just at that moment, three visitors stopped outside the house where we were staying; they had been sent from Caesarea to

fetch me, and the Spirit told me to have no hesitation about going back with them. The six brothers here came with me as well, and we entered the man's house. He told us he had seen an angel standing in his house who said, 'Send to Jaffa and fetch Simon known as Peter; he has a message for you that will save you and your entire household.'

"I had scarcely begun to speak when the Holy Spirit came down on them in the same way as it came on us at the beginning, and I remembered that the Lord had said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' I realized then that God was giving them the identical gift he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ; and who was I to stand in God's way?"

This account satisfied them, and they gave glory to God, saying, "God has clearly granted to the gentiles too the repentance that leads to life." ❖

APRIL 24, 2016

THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE REVELATION OF JOHN 21:1–6

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; the first heaven and the first earth had disappeared now, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride dressed for her husband. Then I heard a loud voice call from the throne, “Look, here God lives among mortals. He will make his home among them; they will be his people, and he will be their God, God-with-them. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes; there will be no more death, and no more mourning or sadness or pain. The world of the past has gone.”

Then the One sitting on the throne spoke. “Look, I am making the whole of creation new. Write this, ‘What I am saying is trust worthy and will come true.’”

Then the One said to me, “It has already happened. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give water from the well of life free to anybody who is thirsty.”❖

APRIL 24, 2016

THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
JOHN 13:31–35

When he had gone out, Jesus said: “Now has the Son of man been glorified, and God too is glorified. The moment God is glorified in him, God’s glory will be on display. In glorifying him, God is glorified and God will glorify him very soon. Little children, I shall be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and, as I told the Judeans, where I am going, you cannot come. I give you a new commandment: love one another; you must love one another just as I have loved you. It is by your love for one another, that everyone will recognize you as my disciples.” ❖

MAY 1, 2016

THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 16:9–15

One night Paul had a vision: a Macedonian appeared and kept urging him in these words, “Come across to Macedonia and help us.” Once he had seen this vision we lost no time in arranging a passage to Macedonia, convinced that God had called us to bring them the good news.

Sailing from Troas we made a straight run for Samothrace; the next day for Neapolis, and from there for Philippi, a Roman colony and the principal city of that district of Macedonia. After a few days in this city we went outside the gates beside a river as it was the Sabbath and this was a customary place for prayer. We sat down and preached to the women who had come to the meeting. One of these women was called Lydia, a woman from the town of Thyatira who was in the purple-dye trade, and who revered God. She listened to us, and the Lord opened her heart to accept what Paul was saying. After she and her household had been baptized she kept urging us, “If you judge me a true believer in the Lord,” she said, “come and stay with us.” And she would take no refusal. ❖

MAY 1, 2016

THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE REVELATION OF JOHN 21:10, 22—22:5

In the spirit, the angel carried me to the top of a very high mountain, and showed me Jerusalem, the holy city, coming down out of heaven from God. I could not see any temple in the city since the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb were themselves the temple, and the city did not need the sun or the moon for light, since it was lit by the radiant glory of God, and the Lamb was a lighted torch for it. The nations will come to its light and the kings of the earth will bring it their treasures. Its gates will never be closed by day — and there will be no night there — and the nations will come, bringing their treasure and their wealth. Nothing unclean may come into it: no one who does what is loathsome or false, but only those who are listed in the Lamb's book of life.

Then the angel showed me the river of life, rising from the throne of God and of the Lamb and flowing crystal-clear. Down the middle of the city street, on either bank of the river were the trees of life, which bear twelve crops of fruit in a year, one in each month, and the leaves of which are the cure for the nations. The curse of destruction will be

abolished. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city; his servants will worship him, they will see him face to face, and his name will be written on their foreheads. And night will be abolished; they will not need lamplight or sunlight, because the Lord God will be shining on them. They will reign forever and ever. ❖

MAY 1, 2016

THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
JOHN 14:23–29**

Jesus replied: Anyone who loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we shall come to them and make a home in them. Anyone who does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not my own: it is the word of the Father who sent me. I have said these things to you while still with you; but the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all I have said to you. Peace I bequeath to you, my own peace I give you, a peace which the world cannot give, this is my gift to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid. You heard me say: I am going away and shall return. If you loved me you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. I have told you this now, before it happens, so that when it does happen you may believe. ❖

(There is an alternate Gospel reading on the Sixth Sunday of Easter)

(This is the alternate Gospel reading on the Sixth Sunday of Easter)

MAY 1, 2016

THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
JOHN 5:1-9**

There was a festival, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now in Jerusalem next to the Sheep Pool there is a pool called Bethesda in Hebrew, which has five porticos; and under these were crowds of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed. One man there had an illness which had lasted thirty-eight years, and when Jesus saw him lying there and knew he had been in that condition for a long time, he said, "Do you want to be well again?" "Sir," replied the sick man, "I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is disturbed; and while I am still on the way, someone else gets down there before me." Jesus said, "Get up, pick up your sleeping-mat and walk around." The man was cured at once, and he picked up his mat and started to walk around. ❖

MAY 8, 2016

THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 16:16–34

It happened one day that as we were going to prayer, we were met by a slave-girl who was a soothsayer and made a lot of money for her masters by foretelling the future. This girl started following Paul and the rest of us and shouting, “Here are the servants of the Most High God; they have come to tell you how to be saved!” She did this day after day until Paul was exasperated and turned round and said to the spirit, “I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to leave that woman.” The spirit went out of her then and there.

When her masters saw that there was no hope of making any more money out of her, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place before the authorities. Taking them before the magistrates they said, “These people are causing a disturbance in our city. They are Israelites and are advocating practices which it is unlawful for us as Romans to accept or follow.” The crowd joined in and showed its hostility to them, so the magistrates had them stripped and ordered them to be flogged. They were given many lashes and then thrown into prison, and the jailer was told to keep a close watch on them. So, following such

instructions, he threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

In the middle of the night Paul and Silas were praying and singing God's praises, while the other prisoners listened. Suddenly there was an earthquake that shook the prison to its foundations. All the doors flew open and the chains fell from all the prisoners. When the jailer woke and saw the doors wide open he drew his sword and was about to commit suicide, presuming that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted at the top of his voice, "Do yourself no harm; we are all here."

He called for lights, then rushed in, threw himself trembling at the feet of Paul and Silas, and escorted them out, saying, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They told him, "Put your entire trust in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, and your household too." Then they preached the word of the Lord to him and to all his household. Late as it was, he took them to wash their wounds, and was baptized then and there with all his household. Afterwards he took them into his house and gave them a meal, and the whole household celebrated their newfound trust in God. ❖

MAY 8, 2016

THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE REVELATION OF JOHN 22:12–14, 16–17, 20–21

Look, I am coming soon, and my reward is with me, to repay everyone as their deeds deserve. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. Blessed are those who will have washed their robes clean, so that they have the right to feed on the tree of life and can come through the gates into the city.

I, Jesus, have sent my angel to attest these things to you for the sake of the churches. I am the sprig from the root of David and the bright star of the morning.

The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come!” Let everyone who listens answer, “Come!” Then let all who are thirsty come: all who want it may have the water of life, and have it free.

The one who attests these things says: I am indeed coming soon. Amen; come, Lord Jesus. May the grace of the Lord Jesus be with you all. Amen. ❖

MAY 8, 2016

THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
JOHN 17:20–26**

I pray not only for these but also for those who through their teaching will come to believe in me. May they all be one, just as, Father, you are in me and I am in you, so that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe it was you who sent me. I have given them the glory you gave to me, that they may be one as we are one. With me in them and you in me, may they be so perfected in unity that the world will recognize that it was you who sent me and that you have loved them as you have loved me.

Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, so that they may always see my glory which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. Righteous Father, the world has not known you, but I have known you, and these have known that you have sent me. I have made your name known to them and will continue to make it known, so that the love with which you loved me may be in them, and so that I may be in them. ❖

MAY 15, 2016

THE DAY OF PENTECOST

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 2:1-21

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? Parthian, 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 Judea, 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.’” ❖

MAY 15, 2016

THE DAY OF PENTECOST

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS 8:14-17

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him. ❖

MAY 15, 2016

THE DAY OF PENTECOST

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
JOHN 14:8-17 (25-27)**

Philip said to Jesus, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the

world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you."

["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. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid."] ❖

MAY 15, 2016

THE DAY OF PENTECOST

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
JOHN 14:8-17 (25-27) (IN GREEK)

Λέγει αὐτῷ Φίλιππος· Κύριε, δείξον ἡμῖν τὸν πατέρα, καὶ ἀρκεῖ ἡμῖν. λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Τοσοῦτω χρόνῳ μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι καὶ οὐκ ἔγνωκάς με, Φίλιππε; ὁ ἑώρακώς ἐμέ ἑώρακεν τὸν πατέρα· πῶς σὺ λέγεις· Δείξον ἡμῖν τὸν πατέρα; οὐ πιστεύεις ὅτι ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ καὶ ὁ πατήρ ἐν ἐμοί ἐστιν; τὰ ῥήματα ἃ ἐγὼ λέγω ὑμῖν ἀπ' ἑμαυτοῦ οὐ λαλῶ, ὁ δὲ πατήρ ἐν ἐμοί μένων ποιεῖ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ· πιστεύετε μοι ὅτι ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ καὶ ὁ πατήρ ἐν ἐμοί· εἰ δὲ μή, διὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτὰ πιστεύετε. ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμέ τὰ ἔργα ἃ ἐγὼ ποιῶ καὶ ὁ πατήρ ποιήσει, καὶ μείζονα τούτων ποιήσει, ὅτι ἐγὼ πρὸς τὸν πατέρα πορεύομαι· καὶ ὅ τι ἂν αἰτήσητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου τοῦτο ποιήσω, ἵνα δοξασθῇ ὁ πατήρ ἐν τῷ υἱῷ· ἐάν τι αἰτήσητέ με ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου ἐγὼ ποιήσω.

Ἐὰν ἀγαπάτέ με, τὰς ἐντολὰς τὰς ἐμὰς τηρήσετε· καὶ ἐγὼ ἐρωτήσω τὸν πατέρα καὶ ἄλλον παράκλητον δώσει ὑμῖν ἵνα ἦ μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας, ὃ ὁ κόσμος οὐ δύναται λαβεῖν, ὅτι οὐ θεωρεῖ αὐτὸ οὐδὲ γινώσκει· ὑμεῖς γινώσκετε αὐτό, ὅτι παρ' ὑμῖν μένει καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν ἔσται.

[Ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν παρ' ὑμῖν μένων· ὁ δὲ παράκλητος, τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ὃ πέμπει ὁ πατήρ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου,

ἐκεῖνος ὑμᾶς διδάξει πάντα καὶ ὑπομνήσει ὑμᾶς πάντα ἃ εἶπον ὑμῖν. εἰρήνην ἀφήμι ὑμῖν, εἰρήνην τὴν ἐμὴν δίδωμι ὑμῖν· οὐ καθὼς ὁ κόσμος δίδωσιν ἐγὼ δίδωμι ὑμῖν. μὴ ταρασσέσθω ὑμῶν ἡ καρδία μηδὲ δειλιάτω.] ❖

MAY 22, 2016

TRINITY SUNDAY

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS 8:1-4, 22-31

Is not Wisdom calling? Is not Understanding raising her voice? On the heights overlooking the road, at the crossways, she takes her stand; by the gates, at the entrance to the city, on the roads, she cries out, “I am calling to you, all people, my words are addressed to all humanity.”

“The LORD created me, first-fruits of his fashioning, before the oldest of his works. From everlasting, I was firmly set, from the beginning, before the earth came into being. The deep was not, when I was born, nor were the springs with their abounding waters. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, I came to birth; before God had made the earth, the countryside, and the first elements of the world. When God fixed the heavens firm, I was there, when God drew a circle on the surface of the deep, when God thickened the clouds above, when the sources of the deep began to swell, when God assigned the sea its boundaries — and the waters will not encroach on the shore — when God traced the foundations of the earth, I was beside the master builder, delighting God day after day, ever at play in God’s presence, at play everywhere on God’s earth, delighting to be with the children of humanity. ❖

MAY 22, 2016

TRINITY SUNDAY

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

So then, 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 exult, 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. ❖

MAY 22, 2016

TRINITY SUNDAY

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
JOHN 16:12–15

I still have many things to say to you, but they would be too much for you to bear now. However, when the Spirit of truth comes it will lead you to the complete truth, since it will not be speaking of its own accord, but will say only what it has been told; and it will reveal to you the things to come. The Spirit will glorify me, since all it reveals to you will be taken from what is mine. Everything the Father has is mine; that is why I said: all that the Spirit reveals to you will be taken from what is mine. ❖

MAY 29, 2016

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 4

1 KINGS 8:22-23 , 41-43

Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands to heaven. He said, “O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and steadfast love for your servants who walk before you with all their heart.

“Likewise when a foreigner, who is not of your people Israel, comes from a distant land because of your name -- for they shall hear of your great name, your mighty hand, and your outstretched arm -- when a foreigner comes and prays toward this house, then hear in heaven your dwelling place, and do according to all that the foreigner calls to you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your people Israel, and so that they may know that your name has been invoked on this house that I have built.” ❖

MAY 29, 2016

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 4

GALATIANS 1:1-12

Paul an apostle -- sent neither by human commission nor from human authorities, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead -- and all the members of God's family who are with me,

To the churches of Galatia:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to set us free from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel-- not that there is another gospel, but there are some who are confusing you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should proclaim to you a gospel contrary to what we proclaimed to you, let that one be accursed! As we have said before, so now I repeat, if anyone proclaims to you a gospel contrary to what you received, let that one be accursed!

Am I now seeking human approval, or God's approval? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still pleasing people, I would not be a servant of Christ.

For I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel that was proclaimed by me is not of human origin; for I did not receive it from a human source, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ. ❖

MAY 29, 2016

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 4

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 7:1-10**

After Jesus had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. A centurion there had a slave whom he valued highly, and who was ill and close to death. When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Judean elders to him, asking him to come and heal his slave. When they came to Jesus, they appealed to him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy of having you do this for him, for he loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us." And Jesus went with them, but when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; therefore I did not presume to come to you. But only speak the word, and let my servant be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and the slave does it." When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, he said, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health. ❖

JUNE 5, 2016

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 5

THE FIRST BOOK OF KINGS 17:17-24

It happened after this that the son of the mistress of the house fell sick; his illness was so severe that in the end he expired. And the woman said to Elijah, ‘What quarrel have you with me, man of God? Have you come here to bring my sins home to me and to kill my son?’ ‘Give me your son,’ he said and, taking him from her lap, he carried him to the upper room where he was staying and laid him on his bed. He cried out to the LORD, ‘LORD my God, by killing her son do you mean to bring grief even to the widow who is looking after me?’ He stretched himself on the child three times and cried out to the LORD, ‘LORD my God, may the soul of this child, I beg you, come into him again!’ The LORD heard Elijah’s prayer and the child’s soul came back into his body and he revived. Elijah took the child, brought him down from the upper room into the house, and gave him to his mother. ‘Look,’ Elijah said, ‘your son is alive.’ And the woman replied, ‘Now I know you are a man of God and the word of the LORD in your mouth is truth itself.’ ❖

JUNE 5, 2016

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 5

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS 1:11-24

Now I want to make it quite clear to you, brothers and sisters, about the gospel that was preached by me, that it was no human message. It was not from any human being that I received it, and I was not taught it, but it came to me through a revelation of Jesus Christ. You have surely heard how I lived in the past, within Judaism, and how there was simply no limit to the way I persecuted the Church of God in my attempts to destroy it; and how, in Judaism, I outstripped most of my contemporaries in my limitless enthusiasm for the traditions of my ancestors. But when God, who had set me apart from the time when I was in my mother's womb, called me through his grace and chose to reveal his Son in me, so that I should preach him to the gentiles, I was in no hurry to confer with any human being, or to go up to Jerusalem to see those who were already apostles before me. Instead, I went off to Arabia, and later I came back to Damascus. Only after three years did I go up to Jerusalem to meet Cephas. I stayed fifteen days with him but did not set eyes on any of the rest of the apostles, only James, the Lord's brother. I swear before God that what I have written

is the truth. After that I went to places in Syria and Cilicia; and was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judaea which are in Christ, they simply kept hearing it said, 'The man once so eager to persecute us is now preaching the faith that he used to try to destroy,' and they gave glory to God for me. ❖

JUNE 5, 2016

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 5

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 7:11-17

It happened that soon afterwards Jesus went to a town called Nain, accompanied by his disciples and a great number of people. Now when he was near the gate of the town there was a dead man being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a considerable number of the town's people were with her. When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, 'Do not weep.' Then he went up and touched the bier and the bearers stood still, and he said, 'Young man, I tell you: get up.' And the dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him to his mother. Everyone was filled with awe and glorified God saying, 'A great prophet has risen up among us; God has visited his people.' And this view of him spread throughout Judaea and all over the countryside. ❖

JUNE 12, 2016

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 6

THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL 11:26-12:10,13-15

When Uriah's wife heard that her husband Uriah was dead, she mourned for her husband. When the period of mourning was over, David sent to have her brought to his house; she became his wife and bore him a son. But what David had done displeased The LORD.

The LORD sent the prophet Nathan to David. He came to him and said: In the same town were two men, one rich, the other poor. The rich man had flocks and herds in great abundance; the poor man had nothing but a ewe lamb, only a single little one which he had bought. He fostered it and it grew up with him and his children, eating his bread, drinking from his cup, sleeping in his arms; it was like a daughter to him. When a traveller came to stay, the rich man would not take anything from his own flock or herd to provide for the wayfarer who had come to him. Instead, he stole the poor man's lamb and prepared that for his guest. David flew into a great rage with the man. 'As the LORD lives,' he said to Nathan 'the man who did this deserves to die. For doing such a thing and for having shown no pity, he shall make fourfold restitution for the lamb.' Nathan then said to David, 'You are the man! The LORD, God

of Israel, says this, “I anointed you king of Israel, I saved you from Saul’s clutches, I gave you your master’s household and your master’s wives into your arms, I gave you the House of Israel and the House of Judah; and, if this is still too little, I shall give you other things as well. Why did you show contempt for The LORD, by doing what displeases him? You put Uriah the Hittite to the sword, you took his wife to be your wife, causing his death by the sword of the Ammonites. For this, your household will never be free of the sword, since you showed contempt for me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite, to make her your wife.”

David said to Nathan, ‘I have sinned against the LORD.’ Nathan then said to David, ‘The LORD, for his part, forgives your sin; you are not to die. But, since you have outraged the LORD by doing this, the child born to you will die.’ And Nathan went home. ❖

JUNE 12, 2016

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 6

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS 2:15–21

We who were born in the Covenant of Abraham and not gentile sinners have nevertheless learnt that someone is reckoned as upright not by practicing the Law but by faith in Jesus Christ; and we too came to believe in Christ Jesus so as to be reckoned as upright by faith in Christ and not by practicing the Law: since no human being can be found upright by keeping the Law. Now if we too are found to be sinners on the grounds that we seek our justification in Christ, it would surely follow that Christ was at the service of sin. Out of the question! If I now rebuild everything I once demolished, I prove that I was wrong before. In fact, through the Law I am dead to the Law so that I can be alive to God. I have been crucified with Christ and yet I am alive; yet it is no longer I, but Christ living in me. The life that I am now living, subject to the limitation of human nature, I am living in faith, faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. I am not setting aside God's grace as of no value; it is merely that if saving justice comes through the Law, Christ died needlessly. ❖

JUNE 12, 2016

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 6

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 7:36-8:3**

One of the Pharisees invited Jesus to a meal. When he arrived at the Pharisee's house and took his place at table, suddenly a woman came in, who had a bad name in the town. She had heard he was dining with the Pharisee and had brought with her an alabaster jar of ointment. She waited behind him at his feet, weeping, and her tears fell on his feet, and she wiped them away with her hair; then she covered his feet with kisses and anointed them with the ointment.

When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who this woman is and what sort of person it is who is touching him and what a bad name she has." Then Jesus took him up and said, "Simon, I have something to say to you." He replied, "Speak, Master." "There was once a creditor who had two men in his debt; one owed him five hundred pieces of silver, the other fifty. They were unable to pay, so he let them both off. Which of them will love him more?" Simon answered, "The one who was let off more, I suppose." Jesus said, "You are right."

Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, “You see this woman? I came into your house, and you poured no water over my feet, but she has poured out her tears over my feet and wiped them away with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but she has been covering my feet with kisses ever since I came in. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. For this reason I tell you that her sins, many as they are, have been forgiven her, because she has shown such great love. It is someone who is forgiven little who shows little love.” Then he said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” Those who were with him at table began to say to themselves, “Who is this man, that even forgives sins?” But he said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

Now it happened that after this he made his way through towns and villages preaching and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. With him went the Twelve, as well as certain women who had been cured of evil spirits and ailments: Mary surnamed the Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, Joanna the wife of Herod’s steward Chuza, Susanna, and many others who provided for them out of their own resources. ❖

JUNE 19, 2016

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 7

THE PROPHET ISAIAH 65:1-9

I was ready to be sought out by those who did not ask,
to be found by those who did not seek me.

I said, "Here I am, here I am,"

to a nation that did not call on my name.

I held out my hands all day long to a rebellious people,
who walk in a way that is not good,

following their own devices;

a people who provoke me

to my face continually,

sacrificing in gardens

and offering incense on bricks;

who sit inside tombs,

and spend the night in secret places;

who eat swine's flesh,

with broth of abominable things in their vessels;

who say, "Keep to yourself,

do not come near me, for I am too holy for you."

These are a smoke in my nostrils,

a fire that burns all day long.

See, it is written before me:

I will not keep silent, but I will repay;
I will indeed repay into their laps
their iniquities and their ancestors' iniquities together,
says the LORD;
because they offered incense on the mountains
and reviled me on the hills,
I will measure into their laps
full payment for their actions.
Thus says the LORD:
As the wine is found in the cluster,
and they say, "Do not destroy it,
for there is a blessing in it,"
so I will do for my servants' sake,
and not destroy them all.
I will bring forth descendants from Jacob,
and from Judah inheritors of my mountains;
my chosen shall inherit it,
and my servants shall settle there. ❖

JUNE 19, 2016

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 7

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS 3:23-39

But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the Law, locked up to wait for the faith which would eventually be revealed to us. So the Law was serving as a slave to look after us, to lead us to Christ, so that we could be justified by faith. But now that faith has come we are no longer under a slave looking after us; for all of you are the children of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus, since every one of you that has been baptized has been clothed in Christ. There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither slave nor freeman, there can be neither male nor female—for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And simply by being Christ's, you are that progeny of Abraham, the heirs named in the promise. ❖

JUNE 19, 2016

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 7

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 8:26-39**

Jesus and the Disciples came to land in the territory of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. Jesus was stepping ashore when a man from the city who was possessed by devils came towards him; for a long time the man had been living with no clothes on, not in a house, but in the tombs.

Catching sight of Jesus he gave a shout, fell at his feet and cried out at the top of his voice, ‘What do you want with me, Jesus, son of the Most High God? I implore you, do not torture me.’ For Jesus had been telling the unclean spirit to come out of the man. It had seized on him a great many times, and then they used to secure him with chains and fetters to restrain him, but he would always break the fastenings, and the devil would drive him out into the wilds. Jesus asked him, ‘What is your name?’ He said, ‘Legion’—because many devils had gone into him. And these begged him not to order them to depart into the Abyss.

Now there was a large herd of pigs feeding there on the mountain, and the devils begged him to let them go into these. So he gave them leave. The devils came out of the man and

went into the pigs, and the herd charged down the cliff into the lake and was drowned.

When the swineherds saw what had happened they ran off and told their story in the city and in the country round about; and the people went out to see what had happened. When they came to Jesus they found the man from whom the devils had gone out sitting at the feet of Jesus, wearing clothes and in his right mind; and they were afraid. Those who had witnessed it told them how the man who had been possessed came to be saved. The entire population of the Gerasene territory was in great fear and asked Jesus to leave them. So he got into the boat and went back.

The man from whom the devils had gone out asked to be allowed to stay with him, but he sent him away saying, 'Go back home and report all that God has done for you.' So the man went off and proclaimed throughout the city all that Jesus had done for him. ❖

JUNE 26, 2016

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 8

FIRST BOOK OF KINGS 19:15–16, 19–21

“Go,” the LORD said, “go back by the same way to the desert of Damascus. You must go and anoint Hazael as king of Aram. You must anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king of Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat, of Able-Meholah, as prophet to succeed you.”

Leaving there, he came on Elisha son of Shaphat as he was plowing behind twelve yoke of oxen, he himself being with the twelfth. Elijah passed near to him and threw his cloak over him. Elisha left his oxen and ran after Elijah. “Let me kiss my father and mother, then I will follow you,” he said. Elijah answered, “Go, go back; for have I done anything to you?” Elisha turned away, took a yoke of oxen and slaughtered them. He used the oxen’s tackle for cooking the meat, which he gave the people to eat. He then rose and, following Elijah, became his servant. ❖

JUNE 26, 2016

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 8

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS 5:1, 13-25

Christ set us free, so that we should remain free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be fastened again to the yoke of slavery.

After all, brothers and sisters, you were called to be free; do not use your freedom as an opening for self-indulgence, but be servants to one another in love, since the whole of the Law is summarized in the one commandment: You must love your neighbor as yourself. If you go snapping at one another and tearing one another to pieces, take care: you will be eaten up by one another.

Instead, I tell you, be guided by the Spirit, and you will no longer yield to self-indulgence. The desires of self-indulgence are always in opposition to the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are in opposition to self-indulgence: they are opposites, one against the other; that is how you are prevented from doing the things that you want to. But when you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. When self-indulgence is at work the results are obvious: sexual vice, impurity, and sensuality, the worship of false gods and sorcery; antagonisms and rivalry, jealousy, bad temper and

quarrels, disagreements, factions and malice, drunkenness, orgies and all such things. And about these, I tell you now as I have told you in the past, that people who behave in these ways will not inherit the kingdom of God. On the other hand the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control; no law can touch such things as these. All who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified self with all its passions and its desires. Since we are living by the Spirit, let our behavior be guided by the Spirit. ❖

JUNE 26, 2016

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 8

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 9:51-62**

Now it happened that as the time drew near for him to be taken up, he resolutely turned his face towards Jerusalem and sent messengers ahead of him. These set out, and they went into a Samaritan village to make preparations for him, and they did not receive him because he was making for Jerusalem. Seeing this, the disciples James and John said, "Lord, do you want us to call down fire from heaven to burn them up?" But he turned and rebuked them, and they went on to another village.

As they traveled along they met a man on the road who said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus answered, "Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head."

Another to whom he said, "Follow me," replied, "Let me go and bury my father first." But he answered, "Leave the dead to bury their dead; your duty is to go and spread the news of the kingdom of God."

Another said, “I will follow you, sir, but first let me go and say good-bye to my people at home.” Jesus said to that one, “Once the hand is laid on the plow, no one who looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.” ❖

JULY 3, 2016

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 9

ISAIAH 66:10-14

Thus says the LORD:

“Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her,
all you who love her;
rejoice with her in joy,
all you who mourn over her--
that you may nurse and be satisfied
from her consoling breast;
that you may drink deeply with delight
from her glorious bosom.”

For thus says the LORD:

“I will extend prosperity to her like a river,
and the wealth of the nations like an overflowing stream; and
you shall nurse and be carried on her arm, and dandled on
her knees. As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort
you; you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.
You shall see, and your heart shall rejoice;
your bodies shall flourish like the grass;
and it shall be known that the hand of the LORD is with his
servants, and his indignation is against his enemies.” ❖

JULY 3, 2016

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 9

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS 6:1-16

Brothers, even if one of you is caught doing something wrong, those of you who are spiritual should set that person right in a spirit of gentleness; and watch yourselves that you are not put to the test in the same way. Carry each other's burdens; that is how to keep the law of Christ. Someone who thinks himself important, when he is not, only deceives himself; but everyone is to examine his own achievements, and then he will confine his boasting to his own achievements, not comparing them with any body else's. Each one has his own load to carry.

When someone is under instruction in doctrine, he should give his teacher a share in all his possessions. Don't delude yourself: God is not to be fooled; whatever someone sows, that is what he will reap. If his sowing is in the field of self-indulgence, then his harvest from it will be corruption; if his sowing is in the Spirit, then his harvest from the Spirit will be eternal life. And let us never slacken in doing good; for if we do not give up, we shall have our harvest in due time. So then, as long as we have the opportunity let all our actions be

for the good of everybody, and especially of those who belong to the household of the faith.

Notice what large letters I have used in writing to you with my own hand. It is those who want to cut a figure by human standards who force circumcision on you, simply so that they will not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. Even though they are circumcised they still do not keep the Law themselves; they want you to be circumcised only so that they can boast of your outward appearance. But as for me, it is out of the question that I should boast at all, except of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. It is not being circumcised or uncircumcised that matters; but what matters is a new creation. Peace and mercy to all who follow this as their rule and to the Israel of God. ❖

JULY 3, 2016

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 9

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 10:1-11, 16-20**

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them out ahead of him in pairs, to all the towns and places he himself would be visiting. And he said to them, ‘the harvest is rich but the laborers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send laborers to do his harvesting. Start off now, but look, I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Take no purse with you, no bag, no sandals. Salute no one on the road. Whatever house you enter, let your first words be, “Peace to this house!” And if anyone is there who shares in peace, your peace will go and rest on that person; if not, it will come back to you. Stay in the same house, taking what food and drink they have to offer, for the laborer deserves his wages; do not move from house to house. Whenever you go into a town where they make you welcome, eat what is put before you. Cure those in it who are sick, and say, “The kingdom of God is very near to you.” But whenever you enter a town and they do not make you welcome, go out into its streets and say, “We wipe off the very dust of your town that clings to our feet, and leave it with you. Yet be sure of this: the kingdom of God is very near.”’

‘Anyone who listens to you listens to me; anyone who rejects you rejects me, and those who reject me reject the one who sent me.’

The seventy-two came back rejoicing. ‘Lord,’ they said, ‘even the devils submit to us when we use your name.’ He said to them, ‘I watched Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Look, I have given you power to tread down serpents and scorpions and the whole strength of the enemy; nothing shall ever hurt you. Yet do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you; rejoice instead that your names are written in heaven.’ ❖

JULY 10, 2016

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 10

THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY 30:9-14

The Lord your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all your undertakings, in the fruit of your body, in the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your soil. For the Lord will again take delight in prospering you, just as he delighted in prospering your ancestors, When you obey the Lord your God by observing his commandments and decrees that are written in this book of the law, because you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

Surely, this commandment that I am commanding you today is not too hard for you, nor is it too far away. It is not in heaven, that you should say, "Who will go up to heaven for us, and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?" Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, "Who will cross to the other side of the sea for us, and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?" No, the word is very near to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart for you to observe. ❖

JULY 10, 2016

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 10

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS 1:1-14

From Paul, by the will of God an apostle of Christ Jesus, and from our brother Timothy to God's holy people in Colossae, our faithful brothers and sisters in Christ. Grace and peace to you from God our Father.

We give thanks for you to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, continually in our prayers, ever since we heard about your faith in Christ Jesus and the love that you show towards all God's holy people because of the hope which is stored up for you in heaven. News of this hope reached you not long ago through the word of truth, the gospel that came to you in the same way as it is bearing fruit and growing throughout the world. It has had the same effect among you, ever since you heard about the grace of God and recognized it for what it truly is. This you learnt from Epaphras, our very dear fellow-worker and a trustworthy deputy for us as Christ's servant, and it was he who also told us all about your love in the Spirit.

That is why, ever since the day he told us, we have never failed to remember you in our prayers and ask that through perfect wisdom and spiritual understanding you should reach

the fullest knowledge of God's will and so be able to lead a life worthy of the Lord, a life acceptable to God in all its aspects, bearing fruit in every kind of good work and growing in knowledge of God, fortified, in accordance with God's glorious strength, with all power always to persevere and endure, giving thanks with joy to the Father who has made you able to share the lot of God's holy people and with them to inherit the light.

Because that is what God has done. It is God who has rescued us from the ruling force of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of the Son that God loves, and in him we enjoy our freedom, the forgiveness of sin. ❖

JULY 10, 2016

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 10

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 10:25-37**

And now a lawyer stood up and, to test Jesus, asked, “Master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus said to him, “What is written in the Law? What is your reading of it?” He replied, “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.” Jesus said to him, “You have answered right, do this and life is yours.”

But the man was anxious to justify himself and said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” In answer Jesus said, “A man was once on his way down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of bandits; they stripped him, beat him and then made off, leaving him half dead. Now a priest happened to be traveling down the same road, but when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. In the same way a Levite who came to the place saw him, and passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan traveler who came on him was moved with compassion when he saw him. He went up to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine on

them. He then lifted him onto his own mount and took him to an inn and looked after him. Next day, he took out two denarii and handed them to the innkeeper and said, ‘Look after him, and on my way back I will make good any extra expense you have.’ Which of these three, do you think, proved himself a neighbor to the man who fell into the bandits’ hands?” He replied, “The one who showed pity towards him.” Jesus said to him, “Go, and do the same yourself.” ❖

JULY 17, 2016

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 11

GENESIS 18:1-10A

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.”❖

JULY 17, 2016

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 11

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS 1:15—28

Christ Jesus is the image of the unseen God, the first-born of all creation, for in him were created all things in heaven and on earth: everything visible and everything invisible, thrones, ruling forces, sovereignties, powers — all things were created through him and for him. He exists before all things and in him all things hold together, and he is the Head of the Body, that is, the Church.

He is the Beginning, the first-born from the dead, so that he should be supreme in every way; because God wanted all fullness to be found in him and through him to reconcile all things to him, everything in heaven and everything on earth, by making peace through his death on the cross.

You were once estranged and of hostile intent through your evil behavior; now he has reconciled you, by his death and in that mortal body, to bring you before himself holy, faultless and irreproachable — as long as you persevere and stand firm on the solid base of the faith, never letting yourselves drift away from the hope promised by the gospel, which you have heard, which has been preached to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become the servant.

It makes me happy to be suffering for you now, and in my own body to make up all the hardships that still have to be undergone by Christ for the sake of his body, the Church, of which I was made a servant with the responsibility towards you that God gave to me, that of completing God's message, the message which was a mystery hidden for generations and centuries and has now been revealed to his holy people. It was God's purpose to reveal to them how rich is the glory of this mystery among the gentiles; it is Christ among you, your hope of glory: this is the Christ we are proclaiming, admonishing and instructing everyone in all wisdom, to make everyone perfect in Christ. ❖

JULY 17, 2016

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 11

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 10:38-42

In the course of their journey Jesus came to a village, and a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. She had a sister called Mary, who sat down at the Lord's feet and listened to him speaking. Now Martha, who was distracted with all the serving, came to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister is leaving me to do the serving all by myself? Please tell her to help me." But the Lord answered, "Martha, Martha, you worry and fret about so many things, and yet few are needed, indeed only one. It is Mary who has chosen the better part, and it is not to be taken from her." ❖

JULY 24, 2016

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 12

THE BOOK OF GENESIS 18:20-32

The LORD said to Abraham, “How great is the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah and how very grave their sin! I must go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry that has come to me; and if not, I will know.”

So the men turned from there, and went toward Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before the LORD. Then Abraham came near and said, “Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will you then sweep away the place and not forgive it for the fifty righteous who are in it? Far be it from you to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?” And the LORD said, “If I find at Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will forgive the whole place for their sake.” Abraham answered, “Let me take it upon myself to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes. Suppose five of the fifty righteous are lacking? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five?” And he said, “I will not destroy it if I

find forty-five there.” Again he spoke to him, “Suppose forty are found there.” He answered, “For the sake of forty I will not do it.” Then he said, “Oh do not let the Lord be angry if I speak. Suppose thirty are found there.” He answered, “I will not do it, if I find thirty there.” He said, “Let me take it upon myself to speak to the Lord. Suppose twenty are found there.” He answered, “For the sake of twenty I will not destroy it.” Then he said, “Oh do not let the Lord be angry if I speak just once more. Suppose ten are found there.” He answered, “For the sake of ten I will not destroy it.” ❖

JULY 24, 2016

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 12

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS 2:6-15

So then, as you received Jesus as Lord and Christ, now live your lives in him, be rooted in him and built up on him, held firm by the faith you have been taught, and overflowing with thanksgiving.

Make sure that no one captivates you with the empty lure of a “philosophy” of the kind that people hand on, based on the principles of this world and not on Christ.

In him, in bodily form, lives divinity in all its fullness, and in him you too find your own fulfillment, in the one who is the head of every sovereignty and ruling force.

In him you have been circumcised, with a circumcision performed, not by human hand, but by the complete stripping of your natural self. This is circumcision according to Christ. You have been buried with him by your baptism; by which, too, you have been raised up with him through your belief in the power of God who raised him from the dead. You were dead, because you were sinners and uncircumcised in body: he has brought you to life with him, he has forgiven us every one of our sins.

He has wiped out the record of our debt to the Law, which stood against us; he has destroyed it by nailing it to the cross; and he has stripped the sovereignties and the ruling forces, and paraded them in public, behind him in his triumphal procession. ❖

JULY 24, 2016

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 12

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 11:1–13**

Now it happened that Jesus was in a certain place praying, and when he had finished, one of his disciples said, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” He said to them, “When you pray, this is what to say: Father, may your name be held holy, your kingdom come; give us each day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive each one who is in debt to us. And do not put us to the test.”

He also said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend and goes to him in the middle of the night to say, ‘My friend, lend me three loaves, because a friend of mine on his travels has just arrived at my house and I have nothing to offer her;’ and the man answers from inside the house, ‘Do not bother me. The door is bolted now, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up to give it to you.’ I tell you, if the man does not get up and give it to him for friendship’s sake, persistence will make him get up and give his friend all he wants.

“So I say to you: Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; everyone who searches finds; everyone who knocks will have the door opened. What parent among you, if your daughter asked for a fish, would hand her a snake? Or if your son asked for an egg, hand him a scorpion? If you then, evil as you are, know how to give your children what is good, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”



JULY 31, 2016

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 13

ECCLESIASTES 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23

Vanity of vanities, says the Teacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity. I, the Teacher, when king over Israel in Jerusalem, applied my mind to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven; it is an unhappy business that God has given to human beings to be busy with. I saw all the deeds that are done under the sun; and see, all is vanity and a chasing after wind.

I hated all my toil in which I had toiled under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to those who come after me -- and who knows whether they will be wise or foolish? Yet they will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. So I turned and gave my heart up to despair concerning all the toil of my labors under the sun, because sometimes one who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave all to be enjoyed by another who did not toil for it. This also is vanity and a great evil. What do mortals get from all the toil and strain with which they toil under the sun? For all their days are full of pain, and their work is a vexation; even at night their minds do not rest. This also is vanity. ❖

JULY 31, 2016

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 13

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS 3:1-11

Since you have been raised up to be with Christ, you must look for the things that are above, where Christ is, sitting at God's right hand. Let your thoughts be on things above, not on the things that are on the earth, because you have died, and now the life you have is hidden with Christ in God. But when Christ is revealed—and he is your life—you, too, will be revealed with him in glory.

That is why you must kill everything in you that is earthly: sexual vice, impurity, uncontrolled passion, evil desires and especially greed, which is the same thing as worshipping a false god; it is precisely these things which draw God's retribution upon those who resist. And these things made up your way of life when you were living among such people, but now you also must give up all these things: human anger, hot temper, malice, abusive language and dirty talk; and do not lie to each other. You have stripped off your old behavior with your old self, and you have put on a new self which will progress towards true knowledge the more it is renewed in the image of its Creator; and in that image there is no room for distinction between Greek and Israelite,

between the circumcised and uncircumcised, or between barbarian and Scythian, slave and free. There is only Christ: he is everything and he is in everything. ❖

JULY 31, 2016

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 13

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 12:13–21

A man in the crowd said to him, ‘Master, tell my brother to give me a share of our inheritance.’ He said to him, ‘My friend, who appointed me your judge, or the arbitrator of your claims?’ Then he said to them, ‘Watch, and be on your guard against avarice of any kind, for life does not consist in possessions, even when someone has more than he needs.’

Then he told them a parable, ‘There was once a rich man who, having had a good harvest from his land, thought to himself, “What am I to do? I have not enough room to store my crops.” Then he said, “This is what I will do: I will pull down my barns and build bigger ones, and store all my grain and my goods in them, and I will say to my soul: My soul, you have plenty of good things laid by for many years to come; take things easy, eat, drink, have a good time.” But God said to him, “Fool! This very night the demand will be made for your soul; and this hoard of yours, whose will it be then?” So it is when someone stores up treasure for himself instead of becoming rich in the sight of God.’ ❖

AUGUST 7, 2016

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 14

GENESIS 15:1-6

The word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, “Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.” But Abram said, “O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” And Abram said, “You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir.” But the word of the LORD came to him, “This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir.” He brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” And he believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness. ❖

AUGUST 7, 2016

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 14

THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS 11:1-3, 8-16

Only faith can guarantee the blessings that we hope for, or prove the existence of realities that are unseen. It is for their faith that our ancestors are acknowledged.

It is by faith that we understand that the ages were created by a word from God, so that from the invisible the visible world came to be.

It was by faith that Abraham obeyed the call to set out for a country that was the inheritance given to him and his descendants, and that he set out without knowing where he was going. By faith he sojourned in the Promised Land as though it were not his, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. He looked forward to the well-founded city, designed and built by God.

It was equally by faith that Sarah, in spite of being past the age, was made able to conceive, because she believed that he who had made the promise was faithful to it. Because of this, there came from one man, and one who already had the mark of death on him, descendants as numerous as the stars of

heaven and the grains of sand on the seashore which cannot be counted.

All these died in faith, before receiving any of the things that had been promised, but they saw them in the far distance and welcomed them, recognizing that they were only strangers and nomads on earth. People who use such terms about themselves make it quite plain that they are in search of a homeland. If they had meant the country they came from, they would have had the opportunity to return to it; but in fact they were longing for a better homeland, their heavenly homeland. That is why God is not ashamed to be called their God, since he has founded the city for them. ❖

AUGUST 7, 2016

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 14

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 12:32-40

There is no need to be afraid, little flock, for it has pleased your Father to give you the kingdom. ‘Sell your possessions and give to those in need. Get yourselves purses that do not wear out, treasure that will not fail you, in heaven where no thief can reach it and no moth destroy it. For wherever your treasure is, that is where your heart will be too.

‘See that you have your belts done up and your lamps lit. Be like people waiting for their master to return from the wedding feast, ready to open the door as soon as he comes and knocks. Blessed those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. In truth I tell you, he will do up his belt, sit them down at table and wait on them. It may be in the second watch that he comes, or in the third, but blessed are those servants if he finds them ready. You may be quite sure of this, that if the householder had known at what time the burglar would come, he would not have let anyone break through the wall of his house. You too must stand ready, because the Son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect.’ ❖

AUGUST 14, 2016

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 15

THE PROPHET JEREMIAH 23:23-29

Am I a God near by, says the LORD, and not a God far off? Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them? says the LORD. Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the LORD. I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in my name, saying, "I have dreamed, I have dreamed!" How long? Will the hearts of the prophets ever turn back-- those who prophesy lies, and who prophesy the deceit of their own heart? They plan to make my people forget my name by their dreams that they tell one another, just as their ancestors forgot my name for Baal. Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream, but let the one who has my word speak my word faithfully. What has straw in common with wheat? says the LORD. Is not my word like fire, says the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces? ❖

AUGUST 14, 2016

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 15

THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS 11:29 – 12:2

It was by faith they crossed the Red Sea as easily as dry land, while the Egyptians, trying to do the same, were drowned.

It was through faith that the walls of Jericho fell down when the people had marched round them for seven days. It was by faith that Rahab the prostitute welcomed the spies and so was not killed with the unbelievers.

What more shall I say? There is not time for me to give an account of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, or of David, Samuel and the prophets. These were men who through faith conquered kingdoms, did what was upright and earned the promises. They could keep a lion's mouth shut, put out blazing fires and emerge unscathed from battle. They were weak people who were given strength to be brave in war and drive back foreign invaders. Some returned to their wives from the dead by resurrection; and others submitted to torture, refusing release so that they would rise again to a better life. Some had to bear being pilloried and flogged, or even chained up in prison. They were stoned, or sawn in half, or killed by the sword; they were homeless, and wore

only the skins of sheep and goats; they were in want and hardship, and maltreated. They were too good for the world and they wandered in deserts and mountains and in caves and ravines. These all won acknowledgement through their faith, but they did not receive what was promised, since God had made provision for us to have something better, and they were not to reach perfection except with us.

With so many witnesses in a great cloud all around us, we too, then, should throw off everything that weighs us down and the sin that clings so closely, and with perseverance keep running in the race which lies ahead of us. Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who leads us in our faith and brings it to perfection: for the sake of the joy which lay ahead of him, he endured the cross, disregarding the shame of it, and has taken his seat at the right of God's throne. ❖

AUGUST 14, 2016

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 15

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 12:49-56

‘I have come to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were blazing already! There is a baptism I must still receive, and what constraint I am under until it is completed!’

‘Do you suppose that I am here to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. For from now on, a household of five will be divided: three against two and two against three; father opposed to son, son to father, mother to daughter, daughter to mother, mother-in-law to daughter-in-law, daughter-in-law to mother-in-law.’

He said again to the crowds, ‘When you see a cloud looming up in the west you say at once that rain is coming, and so it does. And when the wind is from the south you say it’s going to be hot, and it is. Hypocrites! You know how to interpret the face of the earth and the sky. How is it you do not know how to interpret these times?’ ❖

AUGUST 21, 2016

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 16

THE PROPHET ISAIAH 58:9B-14

If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,
if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.

The LORD will guide you continually,
and satisfy your needs in parched places,
and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters never fail.

Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in.

If you refrain from trampling the sabbath,
from pursuing your own interests on my holy day;
if you call the sabbath a delight
and the holy day of the LORD honorable;

if you honor it, not going your own ways,
serving your own interests, or pursuing your own affairs;
then you shall take delight in the LORD,
and I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth;
I will feed you with the heritage of your ancestor Jacob,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken. ❖

AUGUST 21, 2016

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 16

THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS 12:18-29

What you have come to is nothing known to the senses: not a blazing fire, or gloom or total darkness, or a storm; or trumpet-blast or the sound of a voice speaking which made everyone that heard it beg that no more should be said to them. They could not bear the order that was given: If even a beast touches the mountain, it must be stoned. The whole scene was so terrible that Moses said, 'I am afraid and trembling.' But what you have come to is Mount Zion and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem where the millions of angels have gathered for the festival, with the whole Church of the firstborn, enrolled as citizens of heaven. You have come to God himself, the supreme Judge, and to the spirits of the upright who have been made perfect; and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to purifying blood which pleads more insistently than Abel's.

Make sure that you never refuse to listen when he speaks. If the people who on earth refused to listen to a warning could not escape their punishment, how shall we possibly escape if we turn away from a voice that warns us from heaven? That time his voice made the earth shake, but now he has given us

this promise: I am going to shake the earth once more and not only the earth but heaven as well. The words once more indicate the removal of what is shaken, since these are created things, so that what is not shaken remains. We have been given possession of an unshakeable kingdom. Let us therefore be grateful and use our gratitude to worship God in the way that pleases him, in reverence and fear. For our God is a consuming fire. ❖

AUGUST 21, 2016

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 16

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO LUKE
13:10-17**

One Sabbath day he was teaching in one of the synagogues, and there before him was a woman who for eighteen years had been possessed by a spirit that crippled her; she was bent double and quite unable to stand upright. When Jesus saw her he called her over and said, ‘Woman, you are freed from your disability,’ and he laid his hands on her. And at once she straightened up, and she glorified God.

But the president of the synagogue was indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, and he addressed all those present saying, ‘There are six days when work is to be done. Come and be healed on one of those days and not on the Sabbath.’ But the Lord answered him and said, ‘Hypocrites! Is there one of you who does not untie his ox or his donkey from the manger on the Sabbath and take it out for watering? And this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan has held bound these eighteen years—was it not right to untie this bond on the Sabbath day?’ When he said this, all his adversaries were covered with confusion, and all the people were overjoyed at all the wonders he worked. ❖

AUGUST 28, 2016

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 17

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS 25:6-7

Do not put yourself forward in the king's presence

or stand in the place of the great;

for it is better to be told, "Come up here,"

than to be put lower in the presence of a noble. ❖

AUGUST 28, 2016

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 17

THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS 13:1-8, 15-16

Continue to love each other like brothers and sisters, and remember always to welcome strangers, for by doing this, some people have entertained angels without knowing it. Keep in mind those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; and those who are being badly treated, since you too are in the body. Marriage must be honored by all, and marriages must be kept undefiled, because the sexually immoral and adulterers will come under God's judgment . Put avarice out of your lives and be content with whatever you have; God himself has said: I shall not fail you or desert you, and so we can say with confidence: With the Lord on my side, I fear nothing: what can human beings do to me?

Remember your leaders, who preached the word of God to you, and as you reflect on the outcome of their lives, take their faith as your model. Jesus Christ is the same today as he was yesterday and as he will be forever.

Through him, let us offer God an unending sacrifice of praise, the fruit of the lips of those who acknowledge his name. Keep doing good works and sharing your resources, for these are the kinds of sacrifice that please God. ❖

AUGUST 28, 2016

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 17

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 14:1, 7-14**

Now it happened that on a Sabbath day Jesus had gone to share a meal in the house of one of the leading Pharisees; and they watched him closely.

He then told the guests a parable, because he had noticed how they picked the places of honor. He said this, ‘When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take your seat in the place of honor. A more distinguished person than you may have been invited, and the person who invited you both may come and say, “Give up your place to this person.” And then, to your embarrassment, you will have to go and take the lowest place. No; when you are a guest, make your way to the lowest place and sit there, so that, when your host comes, he may say, “My friend, move up higher.” Then, everyone with you at the table will see you honored. For everyone who raises himself up will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be raised up.’

Then he said to his host, ‘When you give a lunch or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relations or rich neighbors, in case they invite you back and so repay

you. No; when you have a party, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; then you will be blessed, for they have no means to repay you and so you will be repaid when the upright rise again.' ❖

SEPTEMBER 4, 2016

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 18

DEUTERONOMY 30:15-20

Moses said to all Israel the words which the Lord commanded him, “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.” ❖

SEPTEMBER 4, 2016

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 18

PAUL'S LETTER TO PHILEMON

From Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus and from our brother Timothy; to our dear fellow worker Philemon, our sister Apphia, our fellow soldier Archippus and the church that meets in your house. Grace and the peace of God our Mother and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I always thank my God, mentioning you in my prayers, because I hear of the love and the faith which you have for the Lord Jesus and for all God's holy people. I pray that your fellowship in faith may come to expression in full knowledge of all the good we can do for Christ. I have received much joy and encouragement by your love; you have set the hearts of God's holy people at rest.

Therefore, although in Christ I have no hesitations about telling you what your duty is, I am rather appealing to your love, being what I am, Paul, an old man, and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus. I am appealing to you for a child of mine, whose father I became while wearing these chains: I mean Onesimus. He was of no use to you before, but now he is useful both to you and to me. I am sending him back to

you — that is to say, sending you my own heart. I should have liked to keep him with me; he could have been a substitute for you, to help me while I am in the chains that the gospel has brought me. However, I did not want to do anything without your consent; it would have been forcing your act of kindness, which should be spontaneous. I suppose you have been deprived of Onesimus for a time, merely so that you could have him back for ever, no longer as a slave, but something much better than a slave, a dear brother; especially dear to me, but how much more to you, both on the natural plane and in the Lord. So if you grant me any fellowship with yourself, welcome him as you would me; if he has wronged you in any way or owes you put it down to my account. I am writing this in my own hand: I, Paul, shall pay it back — I make no mention of a further debt, that you owe your very self to me! Well then, brother, I am counting on you, in the Lord; set my heart at rest, in Christ. I am writing with complete confidence in your compliance, sure that you will do even more than I ask. ❖

SEPTEMBER 4, 2016

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 18

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 14:25-33

Great crowds accompanied Jesus on his way and he turned and spoke to them. “Anyone who comes to me without hating father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, yes and his own life too, cannot be my disciple. No one who does not carry his cross and come after me can be my disciple. “And indeed, which of you here, intending to build a tower, would not first sit down and work out the cost to see if he had enough to complete it? Otherwise, if he laid the foundation and then found himself unable to finish the work, anyone who saw it would start making fun of him and saying, ‘Here is someone who started to build and was unable to finish.’ Or again, what king marching to war against another king would not first sit down and consider whether with ten thousand men he could stand up to the other who was advancing against him with twenty thousand? If not, then while the other king was still a long way off, he would send envoys to sue for peace. So in the same way, none of you can be my disciple without giving up all that he owns.” ❖

SEPTEMBER 11, 2016

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 19

THE BOOK OF EXODUS 32:7-14

The LORD said to Moses, “Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf, and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, ‘These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!’” The LORD said to Moses, “I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. Now let me alone, so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them; and of you I will make a great nation.”

But Moses implored the LORD his God, and said, “O LORD, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians say, ‘It was with evil intent that he brought them out to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth’? Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by

your own self, saying to them, ‘I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.’” And the LORD changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people. ❖

SEPTEMBER 11, 2016

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 19

THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY 1:12-17

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength. By calling me into his service he has judged me trustworthy, even though I used to be a blasphemer and a persecutor and contemptuous. Mercy, however, was shown me, because while I lacked faith I acted in ignorance; but the grace of our Lord filled me with faith and with the love that is in Christ Jesus. Here is a saying that you can rely on and nobody should doubt: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. I myself am the greatest of them; and if mercy has been shown to me, it is because Jesus Christ meant to make me the leading example of his inexhaustible patience for all the other people who were later to trust in him for eternal life. To the eternal King, the undying, invisible and only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. ❖

SEPTEMBER 11, 2016

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 19

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO LUKE
15:1-10

The tax collectors and sinners, however, were all crowding round to listen to Jesus, and the Pharisees and scribes complained saying, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.” So he told them this parable. “Which one of you with a hundred sheep, if he lost one, would fail to leave the ninety-nine in the desert and go after the missing one till he found it? And when he found it, would he not joyfully take it on his shoulders and then, when he got home, call together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, I have found my sheep that was lost.’ In the same way, I tell you, there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner repenting than over ninety-nine upright people who have no need of repentance.

“Or again, what woman with ten coins would not, if she lost one, light a lamp and sweep out the house and search thoroughly till she found it? And then, when she had found it, call together her friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, I have found the coin I lost.’ In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing among the angels of God over one repentant sinner.” ❖

SEPTEMBER 18, 2016

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 20

THE PROPHET AMOS 8:4-7

Hear this, you that trample on the needy, and bring to ruin the poor of the land, saying, “When will the new moon be over so that we may sell grain; and the Sabbath, so that we may offer wheat for sale? We will make the bushel smaller and the price higher, and practice deceit with dishonest scales, buying the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals, and selling the sweepings of the wheat.” The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob: Surely I will never forget any of their deeds. ❖

SEPTEMBER 18, 2016

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 20

THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY 2:1-7

I urge then, first of all that petitions, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving should be offered for everyone, for sovereigns and others in authority, so that we may be able to live peaceful and quiet lives with all devotion and propriety. To do this is right, and acceptable to God our Savior: he wants everyone to be saved and reach full knowledge of the truth. For there is only one God, and there is only one mediator between God and humanity, himself a human being, Christ Jesus, who offered himself as a ransom for all. This was the witness given at the appointed time, of which I was appointed herald and apostle and — I am telling the truth and no lie — a teacher of the gentiles in faith and truth.



SEPTEMBER 18, 2016

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 20

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 16:1-13

Jesus also said to his disciples, “There was a rich man and he had a steward who was denounced to him for being wasteful with his property. He called for the man and said, ‘What is this I hear about you? Draw me up an account of your stewardship because you are not to be my steward any longer.’ Then the steward said to himself, ‘Now that my master is taking the stewardship from me, what am I to do? Dig? I am not strong enough. Go begging? I should be too ashamed. Ah, I know what I will do to make sure that when I am dismissed from office there will be some to welcome me into their homes.’

“Then he called his master’s debtors one by one. To the first he said, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ ‘One hundred measures of oil,’ she said. The steward said, ‘Here, take your bond; sit down and quickly write fifty.’ To another he said, ‘And you, sir, how much do you owe?’ ‘One hundred measures of wheat,’ he said. The steward said, ‘Here, take your bond and write eighty.’

“The master praised the dishonest steward for his astuteness. For the children of this world are more astute in dealing with their own kind than are the children of light.”

“And so I tell you this: use money, tainted as it is, to win you friends, and thus make sure that when it fails you, they will welcome you into eternal dwellings. Anyone who is trustworthy in little things is trustworthy in great; anyone who is dishonest in little things is dishonest in great. If then you are not trustworthy with money, that tainted thing, who will trust you with genuine riches? And if you are not trustworthy with what is not yours, who will give you what is your very own?

“No servant can be the slave of two masters: he will either hate the first and love the second, or be attached to the first and despise the second. You cannot be the slave both of God and of money.” ❖

SEPTEMBER 25, 2016

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 21

THE PROPHET AMOS 6:1, 4-7

Disaster for those so comfortable in Zion and for those so confident on the hill of Samaria, the notables of this first of nations, those to whom the House of Israel has recourse!

Lying on ivory beds and lounging on their couches, they dine on lambs from the flock, and stall-fattened veal; bawl to the sound of the lyre and, like David, they invent musical instruments; drink wine by the bowlful, and lard themselves with the finest oils, but for the ruin of Joseph they care nothing. That is why they will now go into captivity, heading the column of captives. The loungeur's revelry is over. ❖

SEPTEMBER 25, 2016

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 21

THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY 6:6-19

Religion, of course, does bring large profits, but only to those who are content with what they have. We brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it; but as long as we have food and clothing, we shall be content with that. People who long to be rich are a prey to trial; they get trapped into all sorts of foolish and harmful ambitions which plunge people into ruin and destruction. “The love of money is the root of all evils” and there are some who, pursuing it, have wandered away from the faith and so given their souls any number of fatal wounds.

But, as someone dedicated to God, avoid all that. You must aim to be upright and religious, filled with faith and love, perseverance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith and win the eternal life to which you were called and for which you made your noble profession of faith before many witnesses. Now, before God, the source of all life, and before Jesus Christ, who witnessed to his noble profession of faith before Pontius Pilate, I charge you to do all that you have been told, with no faults or failures, until the appearing

of our Lord Jesus Christ, who at the due time will be revealed by God, the blessed and only Ruler of all, the King of kings and the Lord of lords, who alone is immortal, whose home is in inaccessible light, whom no human being has seen or is able to see: to him be honor and everlasting power. Amen.

Instruct those who are rich in this world's goods that they should not be proud and should set their hopes not on money, which is untrustworthy, but on God who gives us richly all that we need for our happiness. They are to do good and be rich in good works, generous in giving and always ready to share — this is the way they can amass a good capital sum for the future if they want to possess the only life that is real. ❖

SEPTEMBER 25, 2016

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 21

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 16:19-31**

Then Jesus said to them, “There was a rich man who used to dress in purple and fine linen and feast magnificently every day. And at his gate there used to lie a poor man called Lazarus, covered with sores, who longed to fill himself with what fell from the rich man’s table. Even dogs came and licked his sores. Now it happened that the poor man died and was carried away by the angels into Abraham’s embrace. The rich man also died and was buried.

“In his torment in Hades he looked up and saw Abraham a long way off with Lazarus in his embrace. So he cried out, ‘Father Abraham, pity me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in agony in these flames.’ Abraham said, ‘My son, remember that during your life you had your fill of good things, just as Lazarus his fill of bad. Now he is being comforted here while you are in agony. But that is not all: between us and you a great gulf has been fixed, to prevent those who want to cross from our side to yours or from your side to ours.’

“So he said, ‘Father, I beg you then to send Lazarus to my father’s house, since I have five brothers, to give them warning so that they do not come to this place of torment too.’ Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the prophets, let them listen to them.’ The rich man replied, ‘Ah no, father Abraham, but if someone comes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ Then Abraham said to him, ‘If they will not listen either to Moses or to the prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone should rise from the dead.’” ❖

OCTOBER 2, 2016

THE FEAST OF FRANCIS OF ASSISI (TRANSFERRED)

GALATIANS 6:14-18

May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything; but a new creation is everything! As for those who will follow this rule-- peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. From now on, let no one make trouble for me; for I carry the marks of Jesus branded on my body. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers and sisters. Amen. ❖

OCTOBER 2, 2016

THE FEAST OF FRANCIS OF ASSISI (TRANSFERRED)

MATTHEW 11:25-30

Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." ❖

OCTOBER 2, 2016

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 22

THE PROPHET HABAKKUK 1:1-4, 2:1-4

The oracle that the prophet Habakkuk saw.

O LORD, how long shall I cry for help,
and you will not listen?

Or cry to you "Violence!"
and you will not save?

Why do you make me see wrong-doing
and look at trouble?

Destruction and violence are before me;
strife and contention arise.

So the law becomes slack
and justice never prevails.

The wicked surround the righteous--
therefore judgment comes forth perverted.

I will stand at my watchpost,
and station myself on the rampart;

I will keep watch to see what he will say to me,
and what he will answer concerning my complaint.

Then the LORD answered me and said:

Write the vision;

 make it plain on tablets,
so that a runner may read it.

For there is still a vision for the appointed time;

 it speaks of the end, and does not lie.

If it seems to tarry, wait for it;

 it will surely come, it will not delay.

Look at the proud!

 Their spirit is not right in them,

 but the righteous live by their faith. ❖

OCTOBER 2, 2016

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 22

PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO TIMOTHY 1:1–14

From Paul, apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God in accordance with God's promise of life in Christ Jesus, to Timothy, dear son of mine. Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Christ Jesus our Lord.

Night and day I thank God whom I serve with a pure conscience as my ancestors did. I remember you in my prayers constantly night and day; I remember your tears and long to see you again to complete my joy. I also remember your sincere faith, a faith which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois, and your mother Eunice, and I am sure dwells also in you.

That is why I am reminding you now to fan into a flame the gift of God that you possess through the laying on of my hands. God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but the Spirit of power and love and self-control. So you are never to be ashamed of witnessing to our Lord, or ashamed of me for being God's prisoner; but share in my hardships for the sake of the gospel, relying on the power of God who has saved us and called us to be holy — not because of anything we

ourselves had done but for God's own purpose and by God's own grace. This grace had already been granted to us, in Christ Jesus, before the beginning of time, but it has been revealed only by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus. He has abolished death, and he has brought to light immortality and life through the gospel, in whose service I have been made herald, apostle and teacher.

That is why I am experiencing my present sufferings; but I am not ashamed, because I know in whom I have put my trust, and I have no doubt at all that he is able to safeguard until that Day what I have entrusted to him.

Keep as your pattern the sound teaching you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. With the help of the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, look after that precious thing given in trust. ❖

OCTOBER 2, 2016

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 22

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 17:5-10

The apostles said to Jesus, “Increase our faith.” The Lord replied, “If you had faith like a mustard seed you could say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.

“Which of you, with a servant plowing or minding sheep, would say to him when he returned from the fields, ‘Come and have your meal at once?’ Would he not be more likely to say, ‘Get my supper ready; fasten your belt and wait on me while I eat and drink. You yourself can eat and drink afterwards?’ Must he be grateful to the servant for doing what he was told? So with you: when you have done all you have been told to do, say, ‘we are servants who are owed nothing: we have done no more than our duty.’” ❖

OCTOBER 9, 2016

TWENTY FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 23

THE SECOND BOOK OF KINGS 5:1-3, 7-15C

Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man and in high favor with his master, because by him the LORD had given victory to Aram. The man, though a mighty warrior, suffered from leprosy. Now the Arameans on one of their raids had taken a young girl captive from the land of Israel, and she served Naaman's wife. She said to her mistress, "If only my lord were with the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy."

When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, "Am I God, to give death or life, that this man sends word to me to cure a man of his leprosy? Just look and see how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me."

But when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent a message to the king, "Why have you torn your clothes? Let him come to me, that he may learn that there is a prophet in Israel." So Naaman came with his horses and chariots, and halted at the entrance of Elisha's house. Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go,

wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored and you shall be clean.” But Naaman became angry and went away, saying, “I thought that for me he would surely come out, and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, and would wave his hand over the spot, and cure the leprosy! Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them, and be clean?” He turned and went away in a rage. But his servants approached and said to him, “Father, if the prophet had commanded you to do something difficult, would you not have done it? How much more, when all he said to you was, ‘Wash, and be clean’?” So he went down and immersed himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God; his flesh was restored like the flesh of a young boy, and he was clean.

Then he returned to the man of God, he and all his company; he came and stood before him and said, “Now I know that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel.” ❖

OCTOBER 9, 2016

TWENTY FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 23

PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO TIMOTHY 2:8-15

Remember the gospel that I carry, “Jesus Christ risen from the dead, sprung from the race of David;” it is on account of this that I have to put up with suffering, even to being chained like a criminal. But God’s message cannot be chained up. So I persevere for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they, too, may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

Here is a saying that you can rely on: If we have died with him, then we shall live with him. If we persevere, then we shall reign with him. If we disown him, then he will disown us. If we are faithless, he is faithful still, for he cannot disown his own self.

Remind them of this; and tell them in the name of God that there must be no wrangling about words: all that this ever achieves is the destruction of those who are listening. Make every effort to present yourself before God as a proven worker who has no need to be ashamed, but who keeps the message of truth on a straight path. ❖

OCTOBER 9, 2016

TWENTY FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 23

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 17:11-19

Now it happened that on the way to Jerusalem Jesus was traveling in the borderlands of Samaria and Galilee. As he entered one of the villages, ten villagers suffering from a virulent skin-disease came to meet him. They stood some way off and called to him, "Jesus! Master! Take pity on us." When he saw them he said, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." Now as they were going away they were cleansed. Finding himself cured, one of them turned back praising God at the top of his voice and threw himself prostrate at the feet of Jesus and thanked him. The man was a Samaritan. This led Jesus to say, "Were not all ten made clean? The other nine, where are they? It seems that no one has come back to give praise to God, except this foreigner." And he said to the man, "Stand up and go on your way. Your faith has saved you." ❖

OCTOBER 16, 2016

TWENTY SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 24

THE BOOK OF GENESIS 32:22-31

The same night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. He took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had. Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. Then he said, "Let me go, for the day is breaking." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me." So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." Then the man said, "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed." Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved." The sun rose upon him as he passed Penuel, limping because of his hip. ❖

OCTOBER 16, 2016

TWENTY SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 24

PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO TIMOTHY 3:14-4:5

You must keep to what you have been taught and know to be true; remember who your teachers were, and how, ever since you were a child, you have known the holy scriptures — from these you can learn the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God and useful for refuting error, for guiding people's lives and teaching them to be upright. This is how someone who is dedicated to God becomes fully equipped and ready for any good work. Before God and before Christ Jesus who is to be judge of the living and the dead, I charge you, in the name of his appearing and of his kingdom: proclaim the message and, welcome or unwelcome, insist on it. Refute falsehood, correct error, give encouragement — but do all with patience and with care to instruct. The time is sure to come when people will not accept sound teaching, but their ears will be itching for anything new and they will collect themselves a whole series of teachers according to their own tastes; and then they will shut their ears to the truth and will turn to myths. But you must keep steady all the time; put up with suffering; do the work of preaching the gospel; fulfill the service asked of you. ❖

OCTOBER 16, 2016

TWENTY SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 24

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 18:1-8

Then Jesus told them a parable about the need to pray continually and never lose heart. “There was a judge in a certain town,” he said, “who had neither fear of God nor respect for anyone. In the same town there was also a widow who kept on coming to him and saying, ‘I want justice from you against my enemy!’ For a long time he refused, but at last he said to himself, ‘Even though I have neither fear of God nor respect for any human person, I must give this widow her just rights since she keeps pestering me, or her coming here will make me lose face.’”

And the Lord said, “You notice what the unjust judge has to say? Now, will not God see justice done to his elect if they keep calling to him day and night even though he still delays to help them? I promise you, he will see justice done to them, and done speedily. But when the Son of man comes, will he find any faith on earth?” ❖

OCTOBER 23, 2016

TWENTY THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 25

THE WISDOM OF SIRACH 35:12-17

Give to the Most High as he has given to you, and as generously as you can afford. For the Lord is the one who repays, and he will repay you sevenfold. Do not offer him a bribe, for he will not accept it and do not rely on a dishonest sacrifice; for the Lord is the judge, and with him there is no partiality. He will not show partiality to the poor; but he will listen to the prayer of one who is wronged. He will not ignore the supplication of the orphan, or the widow when she pours out her complaint. ❖

OCTOBER 23, 2016

TWENTY THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 25

PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO TIMOTHY 4:6-8, 16-18

As for me, my life is already being poured away as a libation, and the time has come for me to depart. I have fought the good fight to the end; I have run the race to the finish; I have kept the faith; all there is to come for me now is the crown of uprightness which the Lord, the upright judge, will give to me on that Day; and not only to me but to all those who have longed for his appearing.

The first time I had to present my defense, no one came into court to support me. Every one of them deserted me — may they not be held accountable for it. But the Lord stood by me and gave me power, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed for all the gentiles to hear; and so I was saved from the lion's mouth. The Lord will rescue me from all evil attempts on me, and bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen. ❖

OCTOBER 23, 2016

TWENTY THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 25

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 18:9-14

Jesus spoke the following parable to some people who prided themselves on being upright and despised everyone else, “Two men went up to the Temple to pray, one a Pharisee, the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood there and said this prayer to himself, ‘I thank you, God, that I am not grasping, unjust, adulterous like everyone else, and particularly that I am not like this tax collector here. I fast twice a week; I pay tithes on all I get.’

The tax collector stood some distance away, not daring even to raise his eyes to heaven; but he beat his breast and said, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner.’ This man, I tell you, went home again justified; the other did not. For everyone who raises himself up will be humbled, but anyone who humbles himself will be raised up.” ❖

OCTOBER 30, 2016

TWENTY FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 26

THE PROPHET ISAIAH 1:10-18

Hear the word of the LORD,
you rulers of Sodom!

Listen to the teaching of our God,
you people of Gomorrah!

What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices?
says the LORD;

I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams
and the fat of fed beasts;

I do not delight in the blood of bulls,
or of lambs, or of goats.

When you come to appear before me,
who asked this from your hand?

Trample my courts no more;
bringing offerings is futile;
incense is an abomination to me.

New moon and sabbath and calling of convocation--
I cannot endure solemn assemblies with iniquity.

Your new moons and your appointed festivals
my soul hates;
they have become a burden to me,

I am weary of bearing them.
When you stretch out your hands,
I will hide my eyes from you;
even though you make many prayers,
I will not listen;
your hands are full of blood.
Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;
remove the evil of your doings
from before my eyes;
cease to do evil,
learn to do good;
seek justice,
rescue the oppressed,
defend the orphan,
plead for the widow.
Come now, let us argue it out,
says the LORD:
though your sins are like scarlet,
they shall be like snow;
though they are red like crimson,
they shall become like wool. ❖

OCTOBER 30, 2016

TWENTY FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 26

THE SECOND LETTER OF PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS 1:1-4, 11-12

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of everyone of you for one another is increasing. Therefore we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith during all your persecutions and the afflictions that you are enduring.

To this end we always pray for you, asking that our God will make you worthy of his call and will fulfill by his power every good resolve and work of faith, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.



OCTOBER 30, 2016

TWENTY FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 26

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 19:1-10

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through it. A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today." So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. All who saw it began to grumble and said, "He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner." Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much." Then Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost." ❖

NOVEMBER 6, 2016

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

THE PROPHET DANIEL 7:1-3, 15-18

In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions that passed through his head as he lay in bed. He wrote the dream down, and this is how the narrative began: Daniel said, ‘I have been seeing visions in the night. I saw that the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea; four great beasts emerged from the sea, each different from the others.

‘I, Daniel, was deeply disturbed and the visions that passed through my head alarmed me. So I approached one of those who were standing by and asked him about all this. And in reply he revealed to me what these things meant. “These four great beasts are four kings who will rise up from the earth. Those who receive royal power are the holy ones of the Most High, and kingship will be theirs for ever, for ever and ever.”



NOVEMBER 6, 2016

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS 1:11-23

And it is in God that we have received our heritage, marked out beforehand as we were, under the plan of the One who guides all things as he decides by his own will, chosen to be, for the praise of his glory, the people who would put their hopes in Christ before he came. Now you too, in him, have heard the message of the truth and the gospel of your salvation, and having put your trust in it you have been stamped with the seal of the Holy Spirit of the Promise, who is the pledge of our inheritance, for the freedom of the people whom God has taken for his own, for the praise of his glory.

That is why I, having once heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus, and your love for all God's holy people, 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 him. May he enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what hope his call holds for you, how rich is the glory of the heritage he offers among his holy people, and how

extraordinarily great is the power that he has exercised for us believers; this accords with the strength of his power at work in Christ, the power which he exercised in raising him from the dead and enthroning him at his 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. He 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 6, 2016

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 6:20-31**

Then fixing his eyes on his disciples Jesus said: How blessed are you who are poor: the kingdom of God is yours. Blessed are you who are hungry now: you shall have your fill. Blessed are you who are weeping now: you shall laugh.

‘Blessed are you when people hate you, drive you out, abuse you, denounce your name as criminal, on account of the Son of man. Rejoice when that day comes and dance for joy, look! — your reward will be great in heaven. This was the way their ancestors treated the prophets.

But alas for you who are rich: you are having your consolation now. Alas for you who have plenty to eat now: you shall go hungry. Alas for you who are laughing now: you shall mourn and weep. ‘Alas for you when everyone speaks well of you! This was the way their ancestors treated the false prophets.

‘But I say this to you who are listening: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who treat you badly. To anyone who slaps you

on one cheek, present the other cheek as well; to anyone who takes your cloak from you, do not refuse your tunic. Give to everyone who asks you, and do not ask for your property back from someone who takes it. Treat others as you would like people to treat you. ❖

NOVEMBER 6, 2016

TWENTY FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 27

JOB 19:23-27A

Job said, “O that my words were written down! O that they were inscribed in a book! O that with an iron pen and with lead they were engraved on a rock forever! For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that at the last he will stand upon the earth; and after my skin has been thus destroyed, then in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see on my side, and my eyes shall behold, and not another.” ❖

NOVEMBER 6, 2016

TWENTY FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 27

THE SECOND LETTER OF PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS 2:1-5, 13-17

As to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we beg you, brothers and sisters, not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as though from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord is already here. Let no one deceive you in any way; for that day will not come unless the rebellion comes first and the lawless one is revealed, the one destined for destruction. He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, declaring himself to be God. Do you not remember that I told you these things when I was still with you?

But we must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the first fruits for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and through belief in the truth. For this purpose he called you through our proclamation of the good news, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold fast to the

traditions that you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by our letter.

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and through grace gave us eternal comfort and good hope, comfort your hearts and strengthen them in every good work and word. ❖

NOVEMBER 6, 2016

TWENTY FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 27

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST OF OUR LORD
JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO LUKE 20:27-38**

Some Sadducees, those who say there is no resurrection, came to Jesus and asked him a question, “Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies, leaving a wife but no children, the man shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother. Now there were seven brothers; the first married, and died childless; then the second and the third married her, and so in the same way all seven died childless. Finally the woman also died. In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had married her.”

Jesus said to them, “Those who belong to this age marry and are given in marriage; but those who are considered worthy of a place in that age and in the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. Indeed they cannot die anymore, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection. And the fact that the dead are raised Moses himself showed, in the story about the bush, where he speaks of the Lord as the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Now he is God not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all of them are alive.” ❖

NOVEMBER 13, 2016

TWENTY SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 28

THE PROPHET ISAIAH 65:17–25

For look, I am going to create new heavens and a new earth, and the past will not be remembered and will come no more to mind. Rather be joyful, be glad for ever at what I am creating, for look, I am creating Jerusalem to be “Joy” and my people to be “Gladness.” I shall be joyful in Jerusalem and I shall rejoice in my people.

No more will the sound of weeping be heard there, nor the sound of a shriek; never again will there be an infant there who lives only a few days, nor an old man who does not run his full course; for the youngest will die at a hundred, and at a hundred the sinner will be accursed.

They will build houses and live in them, they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They will not build for others to live in, or plant for others to eat; for the days of my people will be like the days of a tree, and my chosen ones will themselves use what they have made. They will not toil in vain, nor bear children destined to disaster, for they are the race of the LORD’s blessed ones and so are their offspring. Thus, before they call I shall answer, before they stop speaking I shall have heard.

The wolf and the young lamb will feed together, the lion will eat hay like the ox, and dust be the serpent's food. No hurt, no harm will be done on all my holy mountain, says the LORD. ❖

NOVEMBER 13, 2016

TWENTY SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 28

THE SECOND LETTER OF PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS 3:6–13

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we urge you, sister and brothers, to keep away from any of you who lives an undisciplined life, not in accordance with the tradition you received from us.

You know how you should take us as your model: we were not undisciplined when we were with you, nor did we ever accept food from anyone without paying for it; no, we worked with unsparing energy, night and day, so as not to be a burden on any of you. This was not because we had no right to be, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to imitate.

We urged you when we were with you not to let anyone eat who refused to work.

Now we hear that there are some of you who are living lives without any discipline, doing no work themselves but interfering with other people's. In the Lord Jesus Christ, we urge and call on people of this kind to go on quietly working and earning the food that they eat. My brothers and sisters, never slacken in doing what is right. ❖

NOVEMBER 17, 2016

TWENTY SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - PROPER 28

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 21:5–19**

When some were talking about the Temple, remarking how it was adorned with fine stonework and gifts dedicated to God, Jesus said, “All these things you are staring at now — the time will come when not a single stone will be left on another; everything will be destroyed.” And they put to him this question, “Master,” they said, “when will this happen, then, and what sign will there be that it is about to take place?”

But he said, “Take care not to be deceived, because many will come using my name and saying, ‘I am the one’ and ‘The time is near at hand.’ Refuse to join them. And when you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be terrified, for this is something that must happen first, but the end will not come at once.” Then he said to them, “Nation will fight against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes and plagues and famines in various places; there will be terrifying events and great signs from heaven.

“But before all this happens, you will be seized and persecuted; you will be handed over to the courts and to

imprisonment, and brought before kings and governors for the sake of my name — and that will be your opportunity to bear witness. Make up your minds not to prepare your defense, because I myself shall give you an eloquence and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to resist or contradict.

You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relations and friends; and some of you will be put to death. You will be hated universally on account of my name, but not a hair of your head will be lost. Your perseverance will win you your lives.” ❖

NOVEMBER 20, 2016

THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — THE REIGN OF CHRIST

THE PROPHET JEREMIAH 23:1–6

“Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture, the LORD declares. This, therefore, is what the LORD, God of Israel, says about the shepherds who shepherd my people, ‘You have scattered my flock, you have driven them away and have not taken care of them. So, I shall take care of you for your misdeeds, the LORD declares! But the remnant of my flock I myself shall gather from all the countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; they will be fruitful and increase in numbers. For them I shall raise up shepherds to shepherd them and pasture them. No fear, no terror for them any more; not one shall be lost, the LORD declares!

“Look, the days are coming, the LORD declares, when I shall raise an upright Branch for David; he will reign as king and be wise, doing what is just and upright in the country. In his days Judah will triumph and Israel live in safety. He will be called, ‘ the LORD-is-our-Saving-Justice.’” ❖

NOVEMBER 20, 2016

THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — THE REIGN OF CHRIST

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE COLOSSIANS 1:11—20

May you be fortified, in accordance with God's glorious strength, with all power always to persevere and endure, giving thanks with joy to the One who has made you able to share the lot of God's holy people and with them to inherit the light. Because that is what God has done. It is God who has rescued us from the ruling force of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of the Son that God loves, and in him we enjoy our freedom, the forgiveness of sin.

He is the image of the unseen God, the first-born of all creation, for in him were created all things in heaven and on earth: everything visible and everything invisible, thrones, ruling forces, sovereignties, powers — all things were created through him and for him. He exists before all things and in him all things hold together, and he is the Head of the Body, that is, the Church. He is the Beginning, the first-born from the dead, so that he should be supreme in every way; because God wanted all fullness to be found in him and through him to reconcile all things to him, everything in heaven and everything on earth, by making peace through his death on the cross. ❖

NOVEMBER 20, 2016

**THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST — THE REIGN OF CHRIST
THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO
LUKE 23:33–43**

When they reached the place called The Skull, there they crucified Jesus and the two criminals, one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, “Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing.” Then they cast lots to share out his clothing. The people stayed there watching. As for the leaders, they jeered at him with the words, “He saved others, let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One.” The soldiers mocked him too, coming up to him, offering him vinegar, and saying, “If you are the king of the Judeans, save yourself.” Above him there was an inscription: “This is the King of the Judeans”

One of the criminals hanging there abused him: “Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us as well.” But the other spoke up and rebuked him. “Have you no fear of God at all?” he said. “You got the same sentence as he did, but in our case we deserved it: we are paying for what we did. But this man has done nothing wrong.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” He answered him, “In truth I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.” ❖

NOVEMBER 27, 2016
THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
THE PROPHET ISAIAH 2:1-5

The vision of Isaiah son of Amoz, concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

It will happen in the final days that the mountain of the LORD's house will rise higher than the mountains, and tower above the heights. Then all the nations will stream to it, many peoples will come to it and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob that God may teach us God's ways so that we may walk in God's paths."

For instruction will issue from Zion and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. Then God will judge between the nations and arbitrate between many peoples. They will hammer their swords into ploughshares and their spears into sickles. Nation will not lift sword against nation, no longer will they learn how to make war. House of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the LORD. ❖

NOVEMBER 27, 2016

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS 13:11-14

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. ❖

NOVEMBER 27, 2016

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST OF OUR LORD

JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 24:36–44

Jesus said to them: “But as for that day and hour, nobody knows it, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, no one but God alone.

“As it was in Noah’s day, so will it be when the Son of man comes. For in those days before the Flood people were eating, drinking, and getting married, right up to the day Noah went into the ark, and they suspected nothing till the Flood came and swept them all away. This is what it will be like when the Son of man comes. Then of two men in the fields, one is taken, one left; of two women grinding at the mill, one is taken, one left.

“So stay awake, because you do not know the day when your master is coming. You may be quite sure of this, that if the house holder had known at what time of the night the burglar would come, he would have stayed awake and would not have allowed anyone to break through the wall of his house. Therefore, you too must stand ready because the Son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect. ❖

DECEMBER 4, 2016

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE PROPHET ISAIAH 11:1–10

A shoot will spring from the stock of Jesse; a new shoot will grow from his roots. On him will rest the spirit of the LORD, the spirit of wisdom and insight, the spirit of counsel and power, the spirit of knowledge and fear of the LORD: his inspiration will lie in fearing the LORD. His judgment will not be by appearances, his verdict not given on hearsay. He will judge the weak with integrity and give fair sentence for the humblest in the land. He will strike the country with the rod of his mouth and with the breath of his lips bring death to the wicked. Uprightness will be the belt around his waist, and constancy the belt about his hips.

The wolf will live with the lamb; the panther lie down with the kid, calf, lion and fat-stock beast together, with a little child to lead them. The cow and the bear will graze; their young will lie down together. The lion will eat hay like the ox. The infant will play over the den of the adder; the baby will put his hand into the viper's lair. No hurt, no harm will be done on all my holy mountain, for the country will be full of knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

That day, the root of Jesse, standing as a signal for the peoples, will be sought out by the nations and its home will be glorious. ❖

DECEMBER 4, 2016

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS 15:4–13

And all these things, which were written so long ago, were written so that we, learning perseverance and the encouragement which the scriptures give, should have hope. Now may the God of perseverance and encouragement give you all the same purpose, following the example of Christ Jesus, so that you may together give glory to the God and Creator of our Lord Jesus Christ with one heart.

Accept one another, then, for the sake of God's glory, as Christ accepted you. I tell you that Christ's work was to serve the circumcised, fulfilling the truthfulness of God by carrying out the promises made to the forebears, and his work was also for the gentiles, so that they should give glory to God; as scripture says: For this I shall praise you among the nations and sing praise to your name. And in another place it says: Nations, rejoice, with his people, and in another place again: Praise the Lord, all nations, extol him, all peoples. And in Isaiah, it says: The root of Jesse will appear, he who rises up to rule the nations, and in him the nations will put their hope.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in your faith, so that in the power of the Holy Spirit you may be rich in hope. ❖

DECEMBER 4, 2016

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST OF OUR LORD

JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 3:1–12

In due course John the Baptist appeared; he proclaimed this message in the desert of Judea, “Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is close at hand.” This was the man spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said: A voice of one that cries in the desert, “Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight.”

This man John wore a garment made of camelhair with a leather belt round his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole Jordan district made their way to him, and as they were baptized by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. But when he saw a number of Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism he said to them, “Brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the coming retribution? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance, and do not presume to tell yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father,’ because, I tell you, God can raise children for Abraham from these stones. Even now the axe is being laid to the root of the trees, so that any tree failing to produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown on the fire. I baptize you in water for repentance, but

the one who comes after me is more powerful than I, and I am not fit to carry his sandals; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand; he will clear his threshing-floor and gather his wheat into his barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.” ❖

DECEMBER 11, 2016

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE PROPHET ISAIAH 35:1–10

Let the desert and the dry lands be glad, let the wasteland rejoice and bloom; like the asphodel, let it burst into flower, let it rejoice and sing for joy. The glory of Lebanon is bestowed on it, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon; then they will see the glory of the LORD, the splendor of our God. Strengthen all weary hands, steady all trembling knees and say to the faint-hearted, “Be strong! Do not be afraid. Here is your God, on his way to put things right and redress all wrongs; he is coming to save you.” Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, the ears of the deaf unsealed, then the lame will leap like a deer and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy; for water will gush in the desert and streams in the wastelands, the parched ground will become a marsh and the thirsty land springs of water; the lairs where the jackals used to live will become plots of reed and papyrus.

And through it will run a road for them and a highway which will be called the Sacred Way; the unclean will not be allowed to use it; He will be the one to use this road, the fool will not stray along it. No lion will be there, no ferocious beast set foot on it, nothing of the sort be found; it will be

used by the redeemed. For those whom the LORD has ransomed will return, they will come to Zion shouting for joy, their heads crowned with joy unending; rejoicing and gladness will escort them and sorrow and sighing will take flight. ❖

DECEMBER 11, 2016

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE BOOK OF JAMES 5:7–10

Now be patient, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. Think of a farmer: how patiently he waits for the precious fruit of the ground until it has had the autumn rains and the spring rains! You too must be patient; do not lose heart, because the Lord's coming will be soon. Do not make complaints against one another, brothers and sisters, so as not to be brought to judgment yourselves; the Judge is already to be seen waiting at the gates. For your example, brothers and sisters, in patiently putting up with persecution, take the prophets who spoke in the Lord's name. ❖

DECEMBER 11, 2016

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST OF OUR LORD

JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 11:2–11

Now John the Baptist had heard in prison what Christ was doing and he sent his disciples to ask him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to expect someone else?” Jesus answered, “Go back and tell John what you hear and see; the blind see again, and the lame walk, those suffering from virulent skin-diseases are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life and the good news is proclaimed to the poor; and blessed is anyone who does not find me a cause of falling.”

As the men were leaving, Jesus began to talk to the people about John, “What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swaying in the wind? Then what did you go out to see? A man wearing fine clothes? Look, those who wear fine clothes are to be found in palaces. Then what did you go out for? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and much more than a prophet: he is the one of whom scripture says: Look, I am going to send my messenger in front of you to prepare your way before you.”

“In truth I tell you, of all the children born to women, there has never been anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of Heaven is greater than he.” ❖

DECEMBER 18, 2016

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE PROPHET ISAIAH 7:10–16

The LORD spoke to Ahaz again and said: Ask the LORD your God for a sign, either in the depths of Sheol or in the heights above. But Ahaz said, “I will not ask. I will not put the LORD to the test.” Isaiah then said: “Listen now, House of David: are you not satisfied with trying human patience that you should try my God’s patience too? The Lord will give you a sign in any case: It is this: the young woman is with child and will give birth to a son whom she will call Immanuel. On curds and honey will he feed until he knows how to refuse the bad and choose the good. Before the child knows how to refuse the bad and choose the good, the lands whose two kings are frightening you will be deserted. ❖

DECEMBER 18, 2016

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS 1:1—7

From Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the service of the gospel that God promised long ago through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures. This is the gospel concerning God's Son who, in terms of human nature was born a descendant of David and who, in terms of the Spirit and of holiness, was designated Son of God in power by resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ, our Lord, through whom we have received grace and our apostolic mission of winning the obedience of faith among all the nations for the honor of his name. You are among these, and by his call you belong to Jesus Christ. To you all, God's beloved in Rome, called to be his holy people. Grace and peace from God our Creator and the Lord Jesus Christ. ❖

DECEMBER 18, 2016

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST OF OUR LORD

JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 1:18–25

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being an upright man and wanting to spare her disgrace, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when suddenly the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.” Now all this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken through the prophet: Look! The virgin is with child and will give birth to a son whom they will call Immanuel, a name which means “God-is-with-us.” When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do: he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus. ❖

