

Readings + 9th Sunday after Pentecost, Lect. 16 B + July 21, 2024

Prayer of the Day

O God, powerful and compassionate, you shepherd your people, faithfully feeding and protecting us. Heal each of us, and make us a whole people, that we may embody the justice and peace of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

First Reading Jeremiah 23:1-6

¹Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the LORD. ²Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock, and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the LORD. ³Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. ⁴I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall no longer fear or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the LORD.

⁵The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, who shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ⁶In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

Psalmody Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.

The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.

You restore my soul, O LORD, and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Second Reading Ephesians 2:11-22

Paul writes: ¹¹Remember that at one time you gentiles by birth, whose men were called "the uncircumcision" by those who are called "the circumcision" — a circumcision made in the flesh by human hands — ¹²remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For Christ is our peace; in his flesh Christ has made both into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us, ¹⁵abolishing the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶and might reconcile both to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it.

¹⁷So Christ came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near, ¹⁸for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹So then, you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, ²⁰built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone; ²¹in Christ the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord, ²²in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

Holy Gospel Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

All four Gospels lead up to the feeding of the 5,000 with this story of Jesus and the disciples being followed around the lakeshore by the crowds needing attention. Only Mark adds the comment, "they were like sheep without a shepherd." Matthew and Mark both have the second part of this reading, Mark with more detail.

³⁰ The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. ³¹ He said to them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. ³² And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. ³³ Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and

arrived ahead of them. ³⁴ As Jesus went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

⁵³ When [Jesus and the disciples] had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat. ⁵⁴ When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him, ⁵⁵ and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. ⁵⁶ And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.