

Sunday, July 18, 2021

Lectionary 16, Year B

Introduction

Mark's gospel makes clear how great is the press of the crowd, with its countless needs to be met, on Jesus and his disciples. Yet in today's gospel Jesus advises his disciples to get away and rest, to take care of themselves. Sometimes we think that when others are in great need we shouldn't think of ourselves at all; but Jesus also honors the caregivers' need. We are sent from Christ's table to care for others and for ourselves.

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✙ one God,
the God of manna,
the God of miracles,
the God of mercy.

Amen.

Drawn to Christ and seeking God's abundance,
let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God, our provider,

help us.

It is hard to believe there is enough to share.

**We question your ways when they differ from the ways
of the world in which we live.**

**We turn to our own understanding
rather than trusting in you.**

We take offense at your teachings and your ways.

Turn us again to you.

Where else can we turn?

**Share with us the words of eternal life
and feed us for life in the world.**

Amen.

Beloved people of God:

in Jesus, the manna from heaven,
you are fed and nourished.

By Jesus, the worker of miracles,
there is always more than enough.

Through Jesus, ✙ the bread of life,

you are shown God's mercy:

you are forgiven and loved into abundant life.

Amen.

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.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. My sheep¹ hear my voice.* I know them, and they¹ follow me. *Alleluia.* (John 10:27)

Readings and Psalm

[Jeremiah 23:1-6](#)

From David's line, a righteous shepherd for Israel

[Psalm 23](#)

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want. (Ps. 23:1)

[Ephesians 2:11-22](#)

Reconciled to God through Christ, our peace

[Mark 6:30-34, 53-56](#)

Christ healing the multitudes

Semicontinuous First Reading and Psalm

[2 Samuel 7:1-14a](#)

The promise of the LORD to David

[Psalm 89:20-37](#)

Your love, O LORD, forever will I sing. (Ps. 89:1)

First Reading: Jeremiah 23:1-6

Jeremiah prophesied before the exile in 587 BCE. In this passage, he uses the metaphor of a shepherd to describe the bad kings who have scattered the "flock" of Israel. God promises to gather the flock and to raise up a new king from David's line to save Israel and Judah.

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 not fear any longer, 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, and he 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.”

Psalm: Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want. (Ps. 23:1)

¹The LORD¹ is my shepherd;
I shall not ¹ be in want.

²**The LORD makes me lie down ¹ in green pastures
and leads me be- ¹ side still waters.**

³You restore my ¹ soul, O LORD,
and guide me along right pathways ¹ for your name’s sake.

⁴**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall ¹ fear no evil;
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they ¹ comfort me. R**

⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence ¹ of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is ¹ running over.

⁶**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days ¹ of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the ¹ LORD forever. R**

Second Reading: Ephesians 2:11-22

The author of this letter reminds his audience that originally they were not part of God’s chosen people. Through Jesus’ death, however, they are included in God’s household of faith, whose cornerstone is Jesus Christ.

¹¹Remember that at one time you Gentiles by birth, called “the uncircumcision” by those who are called “the circumcision”—a physical 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 he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. ¹⁵He has abolished 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 groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. ¹⁷So he 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 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 him 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.

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

When Jesus sends his disciples out to teach and heal, they minister among large numbers of people. Their work is motivated by Christ’s desire to be among those in need.

³⁰The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. ³¹He 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. ³²And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. ³³Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. ³⁴As he 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.

⁵³When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat. ⁵⁴When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him, ⁵⁵and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. ⁵⁶And 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.

Semicontinuous First Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-14a

Instead of David building a house (temple) for God, God promises to establish David's house (dynasty) forever. Centuries later, after the Babylonian exile, no king sat on the throne. Even then, however, the people of Israel remembered this promise and continued to hope for a king, the messiah, God's anointed.

¹Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²the king said to the prophet Nathan, “See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.” ³Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you.”

⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: ⁵Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? ⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. ⁷Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?” ⁸Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; ⁹and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. ¹²When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ^{14a}I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me.

Semicontinuous Psalm: Psalm 89:20-37

Your love, O LORD, forever will I sing. (Ps. 89:1)

²⁰“I have found Da- | vid my servant;
 with my holy oil have I a- | nointed him.
²¹**My hand will | hold him fast
 and my arm will | make him strong.**
²²No enemy | shall deceive him,
 nor shall the wicked | bring him down.
²³**I will crush his | foes before him
 and strike down | those who hate him. R**
²⁴My faithfulness and steadfast | love are with him,
 and he shall be victorious | through my name.
²⁵**I will set his hand | on the sea,
 and his right hand | on the rivers.**
²⁶He will say to me, ‘You | are my father,
 my God, and the rock of | my salvation.’
²⁷**I will make | him my firstborn
 and higher than the kings | of the earth. R**
²⁸I will keep my love for | him forever,
 and my covenant will stand | firm for him.
²⁹**I will establish his | line forever
 and his throne as the | days of heaven.”**
³⁰If his children for- | sake my teaching
 and do not walk according | to my judgments;
³¹**if they | break my statutes
 and do not keep | my commandments;**
³²I will punish their transgressions | with a rod
 and their iniquities | with the lash;
³³**but I will not take my | love from him,
 nor let my faithful- | ness prove false. R**
³⁴I will not | break my covenant,
 nor change what has gone out | of my lips.
³⁵**Once for all I have sworn | by my holiness:
 I will not | lie to David.**
³⁶His line shall en- | dure forever
 and his throne as the | sun before me;
³⁷**it shall stand fast forevermore | like the moon,
 the abiding witness | in the sky.” R**

Prayers of Intercession

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Rooted in Christ and sustained by the Spirit, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

Tend your church, O God. Encourage bishops, pastors, and deacons in their proclamation of the gospel. Raise up new leaders and encourage those pursuing a call to ministry. Embolden all the baptized to embody your love and justice. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Restore your creation, O God. Sustain croplands and pastures and safeguard all farm animals and livestock. Preserve lakes, rivers, and streams that offer refreshment. Revive lands recovering from natural disasters and protect coastlands threatened by rising oceans. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Reconcile the nations, O God. Break down the dividing walls that make us strangers to one another and unite us as one human family. Equip leaders to deal wisely with conflict and guide diplomats who seek peaceful solutions. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Heal your people, O God. Look with compassion on immigrants, exiles, and all who are afraid or feel lost. Give rest to those who are weary, comfort to those who are grieving, and recovery to those who are ill (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Nourish this congregation, O God. Prepare a table where we receive food for our hungering spirits. Renew our commitment to provide for one another and revitalize our ministries of feeding and nurturing hungry neighbors. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

You lead us home, O God. We give thanks for all who have died, now citizens with the saints (*especially*). As you have received them into your heavenly home, so welcome all of us to dwell in your house forever. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We lift these and all our prayers to you, O God, confident in the promise of your saving love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Offering Prayer

Jesus, Bread of life,
you have set this table with your very self,
and called us to the feast of plenty.

Gather what has been sown among us,
and strengthen us in this meal.

Make us to be what we receive here,
your body for the life of the world.

Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Christ has set the table with more than enough for all.

Come!

Prayer after Communion

Jesus, Bread of life,
we have received from your table
more than we could ever ask.
As you have nourished us in this meal,
now strengthen us to love the world with your own life.
In your name we pray.
Amen.

Blessing

The blessing of God,
who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us,
✝ be upon you now and forever.
Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.
Thanks be to God.

Upcoming Commemorations

Mary Magdalene, Apostle **Thursday, July 22, 2021**

Sometimes called "the apostle to the apostles" because she told them of her encounter with the risen Lord, Mary was a woman of Galilee who followed Jesus throughout his ministry. She was present at Jesus' crucifixion and his burial.

Birgitta of Sweden, renewer of the church, died 1373 **Friday, July 23, 2021**

Birgitta married at age thirteen and had four daughters. Widowed at age thirty-eight, she gave all that she owned to the poor, and founded a community of monks and nuns led by a woman. Her work is continued today by the Society of St. Birgitta.
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