

## **July 20, The Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

### **Opening Collect**

Almighty God,  
you gave your people your Law of mercy, compassion,  
and generosity to strangers,  
so that they might know how you want us to live.  
Through our Lord Jesus,  
who has fulfilled your Law in every way,  
grant that we may follow your ways of mercy and love,  
keeping your word in our mouths and in our hearts.  
We ask this through your Word, Jesus Christ, our Lord,  
who with you and the Holy Spirit is one God,  
now and for ever.

**Genesis 18:1-10a:** God has been promising Abraham and Sarah a son for some time now. In Chapter 17 God changed their names from Abram and Sarai to names that mean they are of royal parentage – yet they are childless still! In our reading today, God again reaffirms the promise of a child. Indeed, Scripture records that within the year Isaac was born to those it should have been impossible to do so.

The Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;

And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground,

And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:

Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree:

And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said.

And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth.

And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it.

And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.

And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent.

And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him.

**Colossians 1:21-28:** Paul picks up from last week's reading, a hymn extolling the saving action of Christ, bringing about reconciliation between us and God. Paul wrote that before Christ we were estranged from God but that now we are "in Christ," we are presentable to God in Christ's holiness and blameless state. Paul warned the Colossian Christians not to deviate from this gospel ("good news"). Paul wrote of his suffering for his faith in Christ, but that he would not stop since his message is from God and his mission is to take the Gospel to the Gentiles.

you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled

In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight:

If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:

Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;

Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching

every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

**Luke 10:38-42:** Jesus has been demonstrating that the Kingdom is for everyone (he has previously sent disciples not just into Israel but the 70 known nations and last week told a parable where the despised Samaritan was the hero). Having erased religious lines by doing so, he now shreds cultural rules: He was alone with women in their home who are not his relatives, who served him, and he taught them. Indeed, Mary sitting at Jesus' feet shows she is already a disciple (gender lines are crossed). Although Jesus valued both Mary and Martha's roles, he invited Martha into a discipleship relationship with him also.

It came to pass, as they went, that Jesus entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

Martha was distracted with much serving. It happens. It's natural to want to impress your guests, and when your guest is the Lord, even more so. Of course, you would want to do the same for Jesus! He's ...well... Jesus after all! But Martha's serving turned out to be a distraction to her being with Jesus. While she's stuck in the kitchen clanging pots and pans, Jesus is sitting in the living room with her sister Mary sitting at His feet, taking in every word.

That's when the fireworks begin. It's like a scene straight out of Chef Ramsey's Hell's Kitchen. The pasta water is boiling over, the sauce won't thicken, the roast is in danger of being overcooked, the vegetables are getting soggy, the temperature in the kitchen is rising, and Martha finally snaps. She slams her spoon down on the counter and storms out of the kitchen. And who does she lash out at? Not her sister! No. Her guest! The one she was totally focused on, the reason for all her preparations. She lashes out at Jesus!

*It was not Martha's service that Jesus wanted. It was Martha. Jesus came not to be served but to serve. He came to give, not to get. He came not to be the guest, but to be the host, to lay down His life as a sacrifice for sinful humanity, to offer Himself up for the life of the world, to be the Bread of Life and wine from heaven to bring refreshment, forgiveness, life, and salvation to all. As far as Jesus was concerned, Martha's house could have been a wreck, she could have laid out cold cuts and sandwich bread, she could have simply offered a loaf of bread and a dried fish. What mattered most to Jesus was that she have communion with Him, that she hear His word.*

*The Spirit gathered you and drew you to the feet of Jesus. To be given to. To worship is to sit with Mary, to rest in Jesus, to have his Word have its way with you, to participate in his rest. To rest in Jesus and his Word, his saving death, his life, his glory. It's a busy world out there. But there is rest and refreshment in*

*Jesus, and in Him strength to do what your calling demands, not to please God but in thanksgiving that you are pleasing to God.*

*There are many things to occupy you; one thing is needful, necessary, indispensable. Be given to, my friends. Be given to.*

*Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.*

**Concluding Prayers:**

Let us pray for our parish, for our lay and ordained ministers, for our bishop, Todd, , and for all those for whom the word of God is very near, in their mouth and in their heart. Help us to be neighbours to strangers, to people of every land and tongue and culture.

Let us pray pray for the ministry of our parish in our community, that Christ continue to hold us together as the head of his body, the Church. Help us to be neighbours to all who suffer, the lonely, the sick and the sorrowing.

Let us pray for one another as we live the gospel of Jesus Christ in our homes and neighbourhoods. Help us to be neighbours to people of every creed, to Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus, Buddhists and non-believers.

Let us pray for all people of faith in our community and for those who have no faith, but are people of goodwill. Help us to be neighbours to the enemy, the alien, the despised, those with whom we disagree. .

Let us pray for Charles, our king, and our civic leaders and those who serve on various community organizations. Help us to be neighbours to everyone we pass on the road, to salespeople, co-workers, family, and passers-by.

let us pray for ourselves, that Christ might have first place in everything. Help us to be neighbours to one another, and thus to share our lives as we share your word and your supper. God of the covenant, by our baptismal vocation.

In Christ you draw near to ua,  
God of mercy and compassion,  
lifting us out of death,

binding up our wounds,  
and nursing our spirits to health.  
Let such a tenderness  
Compel us to go and do likewise.  
We ask this through your Son  
our Lord Jesus Christ  
who with you and the Holy Spirit,  
is one God, now and for ever.

**For our Parish.**

O GOD the Holy Ghost, Sanctifier of the faithful: Sanctify this parish by thine abiding presence. Enlighten the minds of thy people more and more with the light of the everlasting Gospel. Bring erring souls to the knowledge of God our Saviour; and those who are walking in the way of life, keep steadfast unto the end.

Give patience to the sick and afflicted, and renew them in body and soul.  
Guard from forgetfulness of thee those who are strong and prosperous.  
Increase in us thy manifold gifts of grace, and make us all to be fruitful in good works; O blessed Spirit, whom with the Father and the Son together we worship and glorify, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

**Lord's Prayer**

Our Father,  
who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

THE peace of God, which passeth all understanding,  
keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God,  
and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord:  
And the blessing of God Almighty,

the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you and remain with you  
always. *Amen*