

August 3, The Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Opening Collect

Generous God,
in abundance you give us things
both spiritual and physical.
Help us to hold lightly the fading things of this age
and to grasp tightly the lasting things
of your heavenly realm,
so that all we say and do
might be to your glory alone.
We ask this through the One through whom
we seek the things that are above,
Jesus Christ our Lord,
who with you and the Holy Spirit is one God,
now and for ever.

Hosea 11:1-11: *The northern kingdom of Israel had adopted the worship of Baal, the god of Canaan and Tyre. Off worshipping other gods, they were forgetful that God led them from Egypt, cared for them, healed them, and fed them. Yet God loved them the way a loving parent feels toward his or her child. We hear that they will be carried off in bondage to the Assyrians for a period of time, like a divine "time out." God's anger didn't last for ever, His people returned to Him, and He brought them home.*

When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.
As they called them, so they went from them: they sacrificed unto Baalim, and
burned incense to graven images.

I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms; but they knew not that I
healed them.

I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love: and I was to them as they that
take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them.
He shall not return into the land of Egypt, and the Assyrian shall be his king,
because they refused to return.

And the sword shall abide on his cities, and shall consume his branches, and
devour them, because of their own counsels.
And my people are bent to backsliding from me: though they called them to the
most High, none at all would exalt him.

How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.

I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee: and I will not enter into the city.

They shall walk after the Lord: he shall roar like a lion: when he shall roar, then the children shall tremble from the west.

They shall tremble as a bird out of Egypt, and as a dove out of the land of Assyria: and I will place them in their houses, saith the Lord.

Colossians 3:1-11: *In last week's reading Paul reminded the Colossians that in their baptism into Christ, they died to their previous lives, thoughts, philosophies and spiritual beliefs. In today's reading, Paul stated that this dying and rising in Christ must lead us to godly living and behaviour. Indeed, in the baptised community, racial and social barriers no longer exist, for "Christ is all and in all."*

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

Luke 12:13-21: *Jesus warned his disciples and us about the destructiveness of greed. The reading starts with a request from a man that Jesus order his (probably older) brother to share the inheritance more fairly (the elder only had to provide the younger siblings with a bare minimum so they did not have to beg). Jesus went on to tell the parable of the rich foolish farmer who cared not about his relationship with God, just with his wealth. Let's just say, it didn't end too well for him!*

Someone in the crowd said to Jesus Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

We learn early in life the power money has. It comes with the first allowance and all the rules about not spending it all in one place, etc. The beauty of money is that you can store your wealth, and unlike grain, it won't get moldy. It may not earn much interest these days, but at least it won't rot.

We learn early in life to envy the kids with more money, the latest video games, the latest X-box or whatever is the thing to have. We grow up coveting even more, there seems to be no end to the things we want, and we mistake the abundant life for an abundance of stuff, a hefty portfolio, bigger houses, faster cars, a celebrity lifestyle.

Two brothers came to Jesus. They were fighting over an inheritance and wanted Jesus to serve as mediator. Jesus refuses to get involved. "Man, who made me

judge or arbitrator over you?” Think of this from what you know. Jesus had come to die and rise, and here were two brothers bickering over their share of their folks’ inheritance. You’d think they know better. How many families have been torn apart by inheritance disputes, with everyone demanding their fair share? Jesus used the incident as a warning to his disciples. Watch out! Be on guard against all covetousness. That seemingly polite almost secret sin of the heart unbuckled from God. The heart is like Velcro and will stick to anything. An idol is whatever you bow down and worship in your heart. Whatever you fear, love, and trust above all things. It usually isn’t in God we trust but in gold we trust. And that love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. We will do most anything for money.

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

Concluding Prayers:

Like Israel, God has loved us and called us since we were children, enabling us to walk in faith.

God has chosen not to execute fierce anger upon us and, instead, has chosen to show us mercy. Let us pray for compassion enough to comfort the suffering.

We wander away from God, and yet, even then, God gathers us from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south. Let us pray for hope enough to bolster the discouraged.

When we cried to Lord in our trouble, we were heard, and God delivered us and set our feet upon a straight path. Let us pray for Charles, our king, and all the leaders of the world, that they might have courage enough to tackle the problems of nations and races.

Baptised into Christ, we have set our minds on things that are above, and not of earth. Let us pray for forgiveness enough to heal old wounds.

Baptised into Christ, we have been clothed with Christ, bringing forth a new self.

Let us pray for love enough to bind us to all in Christ’s community,

O God,
the giver of every gift that endures,
only by your grace can we rightly perceive
how wonderful life is
and why it is given.

By the word of your Son
challenge our folly,
confront our greed
and shape our lives
by the wisdom of the gospel.
We make our prayer 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*