

Readings for June 1, 2008

FIRST LESSON: Deuteronomy 11:18–21, 26–28

¹⁸You shall put these words of mine in your heart and soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and fix them as an emblem on your forehead.

¹⁹Teach them to your children, talking about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. ²⁰Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, ²¹so that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land that the LORD swore to your ancestors to give them, as long as the heavens are above the earth.

²⁶See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: ²⁷the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I am commanding you today; ²⁸and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn from the way that I am commanding you today, to follow other gods that you have not known.

PSALM: Psalm 31:1–5, 19–24

In you, O LORD, have I taken refuge; let me never be put to shame;
deliver me in your righteousness.

**²Incline your ear to me;
make haste to deliver me.**

³Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe,
for you are my crag and my stronghold;
for the sake of your name, lead me and guide me.

**⁴Take me out of the net, that they have secretly set for me,
for you are my tower of strength.**

⁵Into your hands I commend my spirit,
for you have redeemed me, O LORD, O God of truth.

**¹⁹How great is your goodness, O LORD,
which you have laid up for those who fear you;
which you have done in the sight of all for those who put their trust
in you.**

²⁰You hide them in the covert of your presence from those who slander them;
you keep them in your shelter from the strife of tongues.

**²¹Blessed be the LORD!
for he has shown me the wonders of his love in a besieged city.**

²²Yet I said in my alarm, "I have been cut off from the sight of your eyes."
Nevertheless, you heard the sound of my entreaty when I cried out to you.

**²³Love the LORD, all you who worship him;
the LORD protects the faithful, but repays to the full those who act
haughtily.**

²⁴Be strong and let your heart take courage,
all you who wait for the LORD.

SECOND LESSON: Romans 1:16–17; 3:22b–31

¹⁻¹⁶For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, "The one who is righteous will live by faith."

^{3-22b}For there is no distinction, ²³since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; ²⁴they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith. He did this to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed; ²⁶it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus.

²⁷Then what becomes of boasting? It is excluded. By what law? By that of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law. ²⁹Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, ³⁰since God is one; and he will justify the circumcised on the ground of faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith. ³¹Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

GOSPEL: Matthew 7:21–29

²¹Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. ²²On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many deeds of power in your name?' ²³Then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; go away from me, you evildoers.'

²⁴Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. ²⁵The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock. ²⁶And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell — and great was its fall!"

²⁸Now when Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astounded at his teaching, ²⁹for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.

Readings for June 8, 2008

FIRST LESSON: Hosea 5:15—6:6

⁵⁻¹⁵I will return again to my place
until they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face.

In their distress they will beg my favor:
⁶⁻¹Come, let us return to the LORD;
 for it is he who has torn, and he will heal us;
 he has struck down, and he will bind us up.
²After two days he will revive us;
 on the third day he will raise us up,
 that we may live before him.
³Let us know, let us press on to know the LORD;
 his appearing is as sure as the dawn;
 he will come to us like the showers,
 like the spring rains that water the earth."
⁴What shall I do with you, O Ephraim?
 What shall I do with you, O Judah?
 Your love is like a morning cloud,
 like the dew that goes away early.
⁵Therefore I have hewn them by the prophets,
 I have killed them by the words of my mouth,
 and my judgment goes forth as the light.
⁶For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice,
 the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.

PSALM: Psalm 50:7–15

Hear, O my people, and I will speak:
 "O Israel, I will bear witness against you;
 for I am God, your God.
⁸**I do not accuse you because of your sacrifices;
 your offerings are always before me.**
⁹I will take no bull-calf from your stalls,
 nor he-goats out of your pens;
¹⁰**for all the beasts of the forest are mine,
 the herds in their thousands upon the hills.**
¹¹I know every bird in the sky,
 and the creatures of the fields are in my sight.
¹²**If I were hungry, I would not tell you,
 for the whole world is mine and all that is in it.**
¹³Do you think I eat the flesh of bulls,
 or drink the blood of goats?
¹⁴**Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving
 and make good your vows to the Most High.**
¹⁵Call upon me in the day of trouble;
 I will deliver you, and you shall honor me.

SECOND LESSON: Romans 4:13–25

¹³For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham

or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations") — in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "So numerous shall your descendants be." ¹⁹He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. ²⁰No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²²Therefore his faith "was reckoned to him as righteousness." ²³Now the words, "it was reckoned to him," were written not for his sake alone, ²⁴but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

GOSPEL: Matthew 9:9–13, 18–26

⁹As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him.

¹⁰And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. ¹¹When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹²But when he heard this, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners."

¹⁸While he was saying these things to them, suddenly a leader of the synagogue came in and knelt before him, saying, "My daughter has just died; but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live." ¹⁹And Jesus got up and followed him, with his disciples. ²⁰Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, ²¹for she said to herself, "If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well." ²²Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, "Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well." And instantly the woman was made well. ²³When Jesus came to the leader's house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, ²⁴he said, "Go away; for the girl is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him. ²⁵But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. ²⁶And the report of this spread throughout that district.

Readings for Sunday, June 15, 2008

FIRST LESSON: Exodus 19:2–8a

²They had journeyed from Rephidim, entered the wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness; Israel camped there in front of the mountain. ³Then Moses went up to God; the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the Israelites: ⁴You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. ⁵Now therefore, if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine, ⁶but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the Israelites."

⁷So Moses came, summoned the elders of the people, and set before them all these words that the LORD had commanded him. ⁸The people all answered as one: "Everything that the LORD has spoken we will do."

PSALM: Psalm 100

Be joyful in the LORD, all you lands;
serve the LORD with gladness and come before his presence with a song.

**²Know this: The LORD himself is God;
he himself has made us, and we are his;
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.**

³Enter his gates with thanksgiving; go into his courts with praise;
give thanks to him and call upon his name.

**⁴For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting;
and his faithfulness endures from age to age.**

SECOND LESSON: Romans 5:1–8

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. ³And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

⁶For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person — though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. ⁸But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.

GOSPEL: Matthew 9:35—10:23

⁹⁻³⁵Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. ³⁶When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; ³⁸therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

¹⁰⁻¹Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. ²These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; ³Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

⁵These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, ⁶but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷As you go, proclaim the good news, 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' ⁸Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment. ⁹Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, ¹⁰no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for laborers deserve their food. ¹¹Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave. ¹²As you enter the house, greet it. ¹³If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. ¹⁵Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

¹⁶See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. ¹⁷Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; ¹⁸and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles. ¹⁹When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; ²⁰for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. ²¹Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; ²²and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. ²³When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly I tell you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

Readings for Sunday, June 22, 2008

FIRST LESSON: Jeremiah 20:7–13

⁷O LORD, you have enticed me,
and I was enticed;

you have overpowered me,
and you have prevailed.
I have become a laughingstock all day long;
everyone mocks me.

⁸For whenever I speak, I must cry out,
I must shout, "Violence and destruction!"
For the word of the LORD has become for me
a reproach and derision all day long.

⁹If I say, "I will not mention him,
or speak any more in his name,"
then within me there is something like a burning fire
shut up in my bones;
I am weary with holding it in,
and I cannot.

¹⁰For I hear many whispering:
"Terror is all around!
Denounce him! Let us denounce him!"
All my close friends
are watching for me to stumble.
"Perhaps he can be enticed,
and we can prevail against him,
and take our revenge on him."

¹¹But the LORD is with me like a dread warrior;
therefore my persecutors will stumble,
and they will not prevail.
They will be greatly shamed,
for they will not succeed.
Their eternal dishonor
will never be forgotten.

¹²O LORD of hosts, you test the righteous,
you see the heart and the mind;
let me see your retribution upon them,
for to you I have committed my cause.

¹³Sing to the LORD;
praise the LORD!
For he has delivered the life of the needy
from the hands of evildoers.

PSALM: Psalm 69:8–20

Surely, for your sake have I suffered reproach,
and shame has covered my face.

**⁹I have become a stranger to my own kindred,
an alien to my mother's children.**

¹⁰Zeal for your house has eaten me up;
the scorn of those who scorn you has fallen upon me.

**¹¹I humbled myself with fasting,
but that was turned to my reproach.**

¹²I put on sackcloth also,
and became a byword among them.

**¹³Those who sit at the gate murmur against me,
and the drunkards make songs about me.**

¹⁴But as for me, this is my prayer to you,
at the time you have set, O LORD:

**¹⁵"In your great mercy, O God,
answer me with your unfailing help.**

¹⁶Save me from the mire; do not let me sink;
let me be rescued from those who hate me and out of the deep waters.

**¹⁷Let not the torrent of waters wash over me,
neither let the deep swallow me up;
do not let the pit shut its mouth upon me.**

¹⁸Answer me, O LORD, for your love is kind;
in your great compassion, turn to me."

**¹⁹Hide not your face from your servant;
be swift and answer me, for I am in distress.**

²⁰Draw near to me and redeem me;
because of my enemies deliver me.

SECOND LESSON: Romans 6:1b–11

^bShould we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? ²By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? ³Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

⁵For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷For whoever has died is freed from sin. ⁸But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

GOSPEL: Matthew 10:24–39

²⁴A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; ²⁵it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

²⁶So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. ²⁷What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. ²⁸Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. ³⁰And even the hairs of your head are all counted. ³¹So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

³²Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; ³³but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

³⁴Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

³⁵For I have come to set a man against his father,
and a daughter against her mother,

and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;

³⁶and one's foes will be members of one's own household.

³⁷Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; ³⁸and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.

Readings for Sunday, June 29, 2008

FIRST LESSON: Acts 12:1–11

About that time King Herod laid violent hands upon some who belonged to the church. ²He had James, the brother of John, killed with the sword. ³After he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. (This was during the festival of Unleavened Bread.) ⁴When he had seized him, he put him in prison and handed him over to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending to bring him out to the people after the Passover. ⁵While Peter was kept in prison, the church prayed fervently to God for him.

⁶The very night before Herod was going to bring him out, Peter, bound with two chains, was sleeping between two soldiers, while guards in front of the door were keeping watch over the prison. ⁷Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He tapped Peter on the side and woke him, saying, "Get up quickly." And the chains fell off his wrists. ⁸The angel said to him, "Fasten your belt and put on your sandals." He did so. Then he said to him, "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me." ⁹Peter went out and followed him; he did not realize that what was happening with the angel's help was real; he thought he was seeing a vision. ¹⁰After they had passed the first and the second guard, they came before the iron gate leading into the city. It opened for them of its own accord, and they went outside and walked along a lane, when suddenly the angel left him. ¹¹Then Peter came to himself and said, "Now I am

sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hands of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting."

PSALM: Psalm 87:1–2, 4–6

On the holy mountain stands the city he has founded;
the LORD loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

**²Glorious things are spoken of you,
O city of our God.**

⁴Of Zion it shall be said, "Everyone was born in her,
and the Most High himself shall sustain her."

**⁵The LORD will record as he enrolls the peoples,
"These also were born there."**

⁶The singers and the dancers will say,
"All my fresh springs are in you."

SECOND LESSON: 2 Timothy 4:6–8, 17–18

⁶As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

¹⁷But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth. ¹⁸The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

GOSPEL: John 21:15–19

¹⁵When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." ¹⁶A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." ¹⁷He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. ¹⁸Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go." ¹⁹(He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, "Follow me."