

Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost, November 08, 2015

The Collect: O God, whose blessed Son came into the world that he might destroy the works of the devil and make us children of God and heirs of eternal life: Grant that, having this hope, we may purify ourselves as he is pure; that, when he comes again with power and great glory, we may be made like him in his eternal and glorious kingdom; where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Old Testament: 1 Kings 17:8-16 read from Revised Standard Version bible

Then the word of the LORD came to him, "Arise, go to Zar'ephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. Behold, I have commanded a widow there to feed you." So he arose and went to Zar'ephath; and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow was there gathering sticks; and he called to her and said, "Bring me a little water in a vessel, that I may drink." And as she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, "Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand." And she said, "As the LORD your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar, and a little oil in a cruse; and now, I am gathering a couple of sticks, that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die." And Eli'jah said to her, "Fear not; go and do as you have said; but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterward make for yourself and your son. For thus says the LORD the God of Israel, 'The jar of meal shall not be spent, and the cruse of oil shall not fail, until the day that the LORD sends rain upon the earth.'" And she went and did as Eli'jah said; and she, and he, and her household ate for many days. The jar of meal was not spent, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD which he spoke by Eli'jah.

The Word of the Lord

Psalm 146 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer

- 1 Hallelujah! Praise the Lord, O my soul! * I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.
- 2 Put not your trust in rulers, nor in any child of earth, * for there is no help in them.
- 3 When they breathe their last, they return to earth, * and in that day their thoughts perish.

4 Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help! * whose hope is in the Lord their God;

5 Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; * who keeps his promise for ever;

6 Who gives justice to those who are oppressed, * and food to those who hunger.

7 The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind; * the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;

8 The Lord loves the righteous; the Lord cares for the stranger; * he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.

9 The Lord shall reign for ever, * your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!

Epistle: Hebrews 9:24-28 read from The Voice Bible

The Anointed One did not enter into handcrafted sacred spaces—imperfect copies of heavenly originals—but into heaven itself, where He stands in the presence of God on our behalf. There He does not offer Himself over and over as a sacrifice (as the high priest on earth does when he enters the most holy place each year with blood other than his own) because that would require His repeated suffering since the beginning of the world. No, He has appeared once now, at the end of the age, to put away sin forever by offering Himself as a sacrifice.

Just as mortals are appointed to die once and then to experience a judgment, so the Anointed One, *our Liberating King*, was offered once *in death* to bear the sins of many and will appear a second time, not to deal again with sin, but to rescue those who eagerly await His return.

The Word of the Lord

Gospel: Mark 12:38-44 read from God's Word Bible

As he taught, he said, “Watch out for the experts in Moses’ Teachings! They like to walk around in long robes, to be greeted in the marketplaces, and to have the front seats in synagogues and the places of honor at dinners. They rob widows by taking their houses and then say long prayers to make themselves look good. The experts in Moses’ Teachings will

receive the most severe punishment.”

As Jesus sat facing the temple offering box, he watched how much money people put into it. Many rich people put in large amounts. A poor widow dropped in two small coins, worth less than a cent.

He called his disciples and said to them, “I can guarantee this truth: This poor widow has given more than all the others. All of them have given what they could spare. But she, in her poverty, has given everything she had to live on.”

The Gospel of the Lord

Closing Prayer: On November 14th we celebrate the Consecration of Samuel Seabury, the first bishop of the United States

A crucial date for members of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America is the consecration of the first Bishop of the Anglican Communion in the United States. During the colonial era, there had been no Anglican bishops in the New World; and persons seeking to be ordained as clergy had had to travel to England for the purpose. After the achievement of American independence, it was important for the Church in the United States to have its own bishops, and an assembly of Connecticut clergy chose Samuel Seabury to go to England and there seek to be consecrated as a bishop.

However, the English bishops were forbidden by law to consecrate anyone who would not take an oath of allegiance to the British Crown. Because of this requirement Seabury turned to the Episcopal Church of Scotland. When the Roman Catholic king James II was deposed in 1688, some of the Anglican clergy (including some who had been imprisoned by James for defying him on religious issues) said that, having sworn allegiance to James as King, they could not during his lifetime swear allegiance to the new monarchs William and Mary. Those who took this position were known as non-Jurors (or non-swearers), and they included almost

all the bishops and clergy of the Episcopal Church in Scotland. Accordingly, the monarchs and Parliament declared that henceforth the official church in Scotland should be the Presbyterian Church. After that the Episcopal Church of Scotland was not recognized by the government, and for some time operated with serious legal problems. However, since it had no connection with the government, it was free to consecrate Seabury without government permission, and it did. This is why you see a Cross of St. Andrew on the Episcopal Church flag.

In the city of Aberdeen in Scotland on November fourteenth 1784, Samuel Seabury was consecrated to the Episcopate by the Bishop and the Bishop Coadjutor of Aberdeen and the Bishop of Ross and Caithness. He thus became part of the unbroken chain of bishops that links the Church today with the Church of the Apostles.

In return, he promised them that he would do his best to persuade the American Church to use as its Prayer of Consecration (the blessing of the bread and wine at the Lord's Supper) the Scottish prayer, taken largely unchanged from the 1549 Prayer Book, rather than the much shorter one in use in England. The prayer was adopted by the American Church and with few modifications, has been widely regarded as one of the greatest treasures of the Church in this country.

Let us Pray: We give you thanks, O Lord our God, for your goodness in bestowing upon this Church the gift of the episcopate, which we celebrate in this remembrance of the consecration of Samuel Seabury; and we pray that, joined together in unity with our bishops, and nourished by your holy Sacraments, we may proclaim the Gospel of redemption with apostolic zeal; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**