

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost Sunday, September 30, 2018

The Collect: O God, you declare your almighty power chiefly in showing mercy and pity: Grant us the fullness of your grace, that we, running to obtain your promises, may become partakers of your heavenly treasure; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Track 1 Old Testament: Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22 Read from the New American Standard Bible

Now the king and Haman came to drink wine with Esther the queen. And the king said to Esther on the second day also as they drank their wine at the banquet, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to half of the kingdom it shall be done." Then Queen Esther replied, "If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me as my petition, and my people as my request; for we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed and to be annihilated. Now if we had only been sold as slaves, men and women, I would have remained silent, for the trouble would not be commensurate with the annoyance to the king." Then King Ahasuerus asked Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who would presume to do thus?" Esther said, "A foe and an enemy is this wicked Haman!" Then Haman became terrified before the king and queen.

Then Harbonah, one of the eunuchs who were before the king said, "Behold indeed, the gallows standing at Haman's house fifty cubits high, which Haman made for Mordecai who spoke good on behalf of the king!" And the king said, "Hang him on it." So they hanged Haman on the gallows which he had prepared for Mordecai, and the king's anger subsided.

Then Mordecai recorded these events, and he sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far, obliging them to celebrate the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same month, annually, because on those days the Jews rid themselves of their enemies, and it was a month which was turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days of

feasting and rejoicing and sending portions of food to one another and gifts to the poor.

The Word of the Lord

Track 2 Old Testament: Numbers 11:4-6,10-16, 24-29 read from the New American Standard Bible

The rabble who were among them had greedy desires; and also the sons of Israel wept again and said, "Who will give us meat to eat? We remember the fish which we used to eat free in Egypt, the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic, but now our appetite is gone. There is nothing at all to look at except this manna."

Now Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, each man at the doorway of his tent; and the anger of the Lord was kindled greatly, and Moses was displeased. So Moses said to the Lord, "Why have You been so hard on Your servant? And why have I not found favor in Your sight, that You have laid the burden of all this people on me? Was it I who conceived all this people? Was it I who brought them forth, that You should say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom as a nurse carries a nursing infant, to the land which You swore to their fathers'? Where am I to get meat to give to all this people? For they weep before me, saying, 'Give us meat that we may eat!' I alone am not able to carry all this people, because it is too burdensome for me. So if You are going to deal thus with me, please kill me at once, if I have found favor in Your sight, and do not let me see my wretchedness."

The Lord therefore said to Moses, "Gather for Me seventy men from the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and their officers and bring them to the tent of meeting, and let them take their stand there with you.

So Moses went out and told the people the words of the Lord. Also, he gathered seventy men of the elders of the people, and stationed them around the tent. Then the Lord came down in the cloud and spoke to him; and He took of the Spirit who was upon him and placed Him upon the seventy elders. And when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But they did not do it again.

But two men had remained in the camp; the name of one was Eldad and the name of the other Medad. And the Spirit rested upon them (now they were among those who had been registered, but had not gone out to the tent), and they prophesied in the camp. So a young man ran and told Moses and said, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp." Then Joshua the son of Nun, the attendant of Moses from his youth, said, "Moses, my lord, restrain them." But Moses said to him, "Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them!"

The Word of the Lord

Track 1 Psalm: Psalm 124 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer

1 If the Lord had not been on our side, * let Israel now say;

2 If the Lord had not been on our side, * when enemies rose up against us;

3 Then would they have swallowed us up alive * in their fierce anger toward us;

4 Then would the waters have overwhelmed us * and the torrent gone over us;

5 Then would the raging waters * have gone right over us.

6 Blessed be the Lord! * he has not given us over to be a prey for their teeth.

7 We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowler; * the snare is broken, and we have escaped.

8 Our help is in the Name of the Lord, * the maker of heaven and earth.

Track 2 Psalm: Psalm 19:7-14 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer

7 The law of the Lord is perfect and revives the soul; * the testimony of the Lord is sure and gives wisdom to the innocent.

8 The statutes of the Lord are just and rejoice the heart; * the commandment of the Lord is clear and gives light to the eyes.

9 The fear of the Lord is clean and endures for ever; * the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

10 More to be desired are they than gold, more than much fine gold, * sweeter far than honey, than honey in the comb.

11 By them also is your servant enlightened, * and in keeping them there is great reward.

12 Who can tell how often he offends? * cleanse me from my secret faults.

13 Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not get dominion over me; * then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a great offense.

14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, * O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.

Epistle: James 5:13-20 read from The New Century Version Bible

Anyone who is having troubles should pray. Anyone who is happy should sing praises.

Anyone who is sick should call the church's elders. They should pray for and pour oil on the person in the name of the Lord. And the prayer that is said with faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will heal that person. And if the person has sinned, the sins will be forgiven.

Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so God can heal you. When a believing person prays, great things happen. Elijah was a human being just like us. He prayed that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years! Then Elijah prayed again, and the rain came down from the sky, and the land produced crops again.

My brothers and sisters, if one of you wanders away from the truth, and someone helps that person come back, remember this: Anyone who brings a sinner back from the wrong way will save that sinner's soul from death and will cause many sins to be forgiven.

The Word of the Lord

Gospel: Mark 9:38-50 read from The New International Version Bible

"Teacher," said John, "we saw someone driving out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us."

"Do not stop him," Jesus said. "For no one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me, for whoever is not against us is for us. Truly I tell you, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to the Messiah will certainly not lose their reward.

"If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be

better for them if a large millstone were hung around their neck and they were thrown into the sea. If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, where “the worms that eat them do not die, and the fire is not quenched.’

Everyone will be salted with fire. “Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can you make it salty again? Have salt among yourselves, and be at peace with each other.”

The Gospel of the Lord

Closing Prayer: On October 4th we remember the life of Francis of Assisi, Friar. Read from *A Great Cloud of Witnesses*.

Francis, the son of a prosperous merchant of Assisi, was born in 1182. His early youth was spent in harmless revelry and fruitless attempts to win military glory.

Various encounters with beggars and lepers pricked the young man's conscience, and he decided to embrace a life devoted to Lady Poverty. Despite his father's intense opposition, Francis totally renounced all material values and devoted himself to serve the poor. In 1210, Pope Innocent III confirmed the simple Rule for the order of Friars Minor, a name Francis chose to emphasize his desire to be numbered among the “least” of God's servants.

The order grew rapidly all over Europe. But, by 1221, Francis had lost control of it, since his ideal of strict and absolute poverty, both for the individual friars and for the order as a whole, was found to be too difficult to maintain. His last years were spent in much suffering of body and spirit, but his unconquerable joy never failed.

Not long before his death, during a retreat on Mount La Verna, Francis received, on September 14th, Holy Cross Day, the marks of the Lord's wounds, the stigmata, in his own hands and feet and side. Pope Gregory IX, a former patron of the Franciscans, canonized

Francis in 1228 and began the erection of the great basilica in Assisi where Francis is buried.

Of all the saints, Francis is the most popular and admired but probably the least imitated; few have attained to his total identification with the poverty and suffering of Christ. Francis left few writings; but, of these, his spirit of joyous faith comes through most truly in the "Canticle of the Sun," which he composed at Clare's convent of St. Damian. The version in The Hymnal (1982 # 406; #407 read):

Most High, omnipotent, good Lord,
To thee be ceaseless praise outpoured,
And blessing without measure,
Let creatures all give thanks to thee
And serve in great humility.

Let us pray: Most high, omnipotent, good Lord, grant your people grace to renounce gladly the vanities of this world; that, following the way of blessed Francis, we may, for love of you, delight in your whole creation with perfectness of joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**