

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost, August 20

The Collect and Psalms will be read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer.

The Old Testament, Epistle and Gospel will be read from New Century Version Bible

The Collect: Almighty God, you have given your only Son to be for us a sacrifice for sin, and also an example of godly life: Give us grace to receive thankfully the fruits of his redeeming work, and to follow daily in the blessed steps of his most holy life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Track 1 Old Testament: Genesis 45:1-15

45 Joseph could not control himself in front of his servants any longer, so he cried out, "Have everyone leave me." When only the brothers were left with Joseph, he told them who he was. 2 Joseph cried so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and the people in the king's palace heard about it. 3 He said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" But the brothers could not answer him, because they were very afraid of him.

4 So Joseph said to them, "Come close to me." When the brothers came close to him, he said to them, "I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold as a slave to go to Egypt. 5 Now don't be worried or angry with yourselves because you sold me here. God sent me here ahead of you to save people's lives. 6 No food has grown on the land for two years now, and there will be five more years without planting or harvest. 7 So God sent me here ahead of you to make sure you have some descendants left on earth and to keep you alive in an amazing way. 8 So it was not you who sent me here, but God. God has made me the highest officer of the king of Egypt. I am in charge of his palace, and I am the master of all the land of Egypt.

9 "So leave quickly and go to my father. Tell him, 'Your son Joseph says: God has made me master over all Egypt. Come down to me quickly. 10 Live in the land of Goshen where you will be near me. Your children, your grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all that you have will also be near me. 11 I will care for you during the next five years of hunger so that

you and your family and all that you have will not starve.'

12 "Now you can see for yourselves, and so can my brother Benjamin, that the one speaking to you is really Joseph. 13 So tell my father about how powerful I have become in Egypt. Tell him about everything you have seen. Now hurry and bring him back to me."

14 Then Joseph hugged his brother Benjamin and cried, and Benjamin cried also. 15 And Joseph kissed all his brothers and cried as he hugged them. After this, his brothers talked with him.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Track 1 Psalm: Psalm 133

1 Oh, how good and pleasant it is, *
 when brethren live together in unity!
2 It is like fine oil upon the head *
 that runs down upon the beard,
3 Upon the beard of Aaron, *
 and runs down upon the collar of his robe.
4 It is like the dew of Hermon *
 that falls upon the hills of Zion.
5 For there the Lord has ordained the blessing: *
 life for evermore.

Track 2 Old Testament: Isaiah 56:1, 6-8

56 This is what the Lord says:
"Give justice to all people,
 and do what is right,
because my salvation will come to you soon.
 Soon everyone will know that I do what is right.
Foreigners will join the Lord
 to worship him and love him,

to serve him,
to obey the law about the Sabbath,
and to keep my agreement.
7 I will bring these people to my holy mountain
and give them joy in my house of prayer.
The offerings and sacrifices
they place on my altar will please me,
because my Temple will be called
a house for prayer for people from all nations.”

8 The Lord God says—
he who gathers the Israelites that were forced to leave their country:
“I will bring together other people
to join those who are already gathered.”
Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Track 2 Psalm: Psalm 67

1 May God be merciful to us and bless us, *
show us the light of his countenance and come to us.
2 Let your ways be known upon earth, *
your saving health among all nations.
3 Let the peoples praise you, O God; *
let all the peoples praise you.
4 Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, *
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide all the nations upon earth.
5 Let the peoples praise you, O God; *
let all the peoples praise you.
6 The earth has brought forth her increase; *
may God, our own God, give us his blessing.
7 May God give us his blessing, *
and may all the ends of the earth stand in awe of him.

Epistle: Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32

11 So I ask: Did God throw out his people? No! I myself am an Israelite from the family of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God chose the Israelites to be his people before they were born, and he has not thrown his people out.

29 God never changes his mind about the people he calls and the things he gives them.

30 At one time you refused to obey God. But now you have received mercy, because those people refused to obey. 31 And now the Jews refuse to obey, because God showed mercy to you. But this happened so that they also can receive mercy from him. 32 God has given all people over to their stubborn ways so that he can show mercy to all.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people**Gospel: Matthew 15: (10-20), 21-28**

10 After Jesus called the crowd to him, he said, "Listen and understand what I am saying.

11 It is not what people put into their mouths that makes them unclean. It is what comes out of their mouths that makes them unclean."

12 Then his followers came to him and asked, "Do you know that the Pharisees are angry because of what you said?"

13 Jesus answered, "Every plant that my Father in heaven has not planted himself will be pulled up by the roots. 14 Stay away from the Pharisees; they are blind leaders. And if a blind person leads a blind person, both will fall into a ditch."

15 Peter said, "Explain the example to us."

16 Jesus said, "Do you still not understand? 17 Surely you know that all the food that enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then goes out of the body. 18 But what people say with their mouths comes from the way they think; these are the things that make people unclean. 19 Out of the mind come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual sins, stealing, lying, and speaking evil of others. 20 These things make people unclean; eating with

unwashed hands does not make them unclean.”

21 Jesus left that place and went to the area of Tyre and Sidon. 22 A Canaanite woman from that area came to Jesus and cried out, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter has a demon, and she is suffering very much.”

23 But Jesus did not answer the woman. So his followers came to Jesus and begged him, “Tell the woman to go away. She is following us and shouting.”

24 Jesus answered, “God sent me only to the lost sheep, the people of Israel.”

25 Then the woman came to Jesus again and bowed before him and said, “Lord, help me!”

26 Jesus answered, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and give it to the dogs.”

27 The woman said, “Yes, Lord, but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.”

28 Then Jesus answered, “Woman, you have great faith! I will do what you asked.” And at that moment the woman’s daughter was healed.

The Gospel of the Lord

Closing Prayer On August 20 we celebrate the life of Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux. Read from A Great Cloud of Witnesses.

Bernard was the son of a knight and landowner who lived near Dijon, France. He was born in 1090 and given a secular education, but in 1113 he entered the Benedictine Abbey of Citeaux. His family was not pleased with his choice of a monastic life, but he nevertheless persuaded four of his brothers and about twenty-six of his friends to join him. After only three years, the abbot of Citeaux deployed Bernard and a small company of monks to establish a monastery at Clairvaux in 1115.

The work at Clairvaux, and the extreme rigors of the Benedictine rule practiced by the Cistercian community, were taxing. Tasked with much, Bernard denied himself sleep to the detriment of his health that he might have time to write letters and sermons. He preached so persuasively that sixty new abbeys were founded, all affiliated with Clairvaux. Famed for the ardor with which he preached love for God “without measure,” he fulfilled his own definition of a holy man: “seen to be good and charitable, holding back nothing for himself, but using his every gift for the common good.”

By 1140, his writings had made him one of the most influential figures in Christendom. His guidance was sought by prelates and princes, drawing him into active participation in all manner of controversy involving the Church, from settling disputes among secular rulers to sorting contentious theological debates. An ardent opponent of a growing movement of his time to reconcile inconsistencies of doctrine by reason, he felt that such an approach was a downgrading of the mysteries. This conflict took particular expression in his fierce opposition to the formidable theologian, Abelard.

When a former monk of Clairvaux was elected Pope Eugenius III, papal reliance upon Bernard grew. Commissioned by the Pope, Bernard preached the Crusade against the Albigensians and the Second Crusade to liberate Jerusalem, winning much support for the latter in France and Germany. When that Crusade ended in disaster, Bernard was roundly attacked for having supported it. He died soon after in 1153.

Among Bernard’s writings are treatises on papal duty, on love, on the veneration of Mary, and a commentary on the Song of Songs. Among well known hymns, he is credited with having written “O sacred head sore wounded” (The Hymnal 1982, #168; #169), “Jesus, the very thought of thee” (#642) and “O Jesus, joy of loving hearts” (#649; #650).

Let us pray: O God, by whose grace your servant Bernard of Clairvaux, kindled with the flame of your love, became a burning and a shining light in your Church: Grant that we also may be aflame with the spirit of love and discipline and walk before you as children of light; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**