

## **Fifth Sunday in Lent, March 17**

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 the New American Standard Bible

**The Collect:** Almighty God, you alone can bring into order the unruly wills and affections of sinners: Grant your people grace to love what you command and desire what you promise; that, among the swift and varied changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

### **Old Testament: Jeremiah 31:31-34**

31 "Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers on the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the Lord. 33 "For this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the Lord: "I will put My law within them and write it on their heart; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 They will not teach again, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the Lord, "for I will forgive their wrongdoing, and their sin I will no longer remember."

### **Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People**

### **Psalm: Psalm 51:1-13 or Psalm 119:9-16**

1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; \*  
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.  
2 Wash me through and through from my wickedness \*  
and cleanse me from my sin.  
3 For I know my transgressions, \*  
and my sin is ever before me.

- 4 Against you only have I sinned \*  
and done what is evil in your sight.
- 5 And so you are justified when you speak \*  
and upright in your judgment.
- 6 Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, \*  
a sinner from my mother's womb.
- 7 For behold, you look for truth deep within me, \*  
and will make me understand wisdom secretly.
- 8 Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure; \*  
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.
- 9 Make me hear of joy and gladness, \*  
that the body you have broken may rejoice.
- 10 Hide your face from my sins \*  
and blot out all my iniquities.
- 11 Create in me a clean heart, O God, \*  
and renew a right spirit within me.
- 12 Cast me not away from your presence \*  
and take not your holy Spirit from me.
- 13 Give me the joy of your saving help again \*  
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.

### **Psalm 119:9-16**

- 9 How shall a young man cleanse his way? \*  
By keeping to your words.
- 10 With my whole heart I seek you; \*  
let me not stray from your commandments.
- 11 I treasure your promise in my heart, \*  
that I may not sin against you.
- 12 Blessed are you, O Lord; \*  
instruct me in your statutes.
- 13 With my lips will I recite \*  
all the judgments of your mouth.

14 I have taken greater delight in the way of your decrees \*

than in all manner of riches.

15 I will meditate on your commandments \*

and give attention to your ways.

16 My delight is in your statutes; \*

I will not forget your word.

### **Epistle: Hebrews 5:5-10**

5 So too Christ did not glorify Himself in becoming a high priest, but it was He who said to Him,

“You are My Son,

Today I have fathered You”;

6 just as He also says in another passage,

“You are a priest forever

According to the order of Melchizedek.”

7 In the days of His humanity, He offered up both prayers and pleas with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His devout behavior. 8 Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. 9 And having been perfected, He became the source of eternal salvation for all those who obey Him, 10 being designated by God as High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

### **Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People**

### **Gospel: John 12:20-33**

20 Now there were some Greeks among those who were going up to worship at the feast; 21 these people then came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and were making a request of him, saying, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” 22 Philip \*came and \*told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip \*came and \*told Jesus. 23 But Jesus \*answered them by saying, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24 Truly, truly I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

25 The one who loves his life loses it, and the one who hates his life in this world will keep it to eternal life. 26 If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.

27 “Now My soul has become troubled; and what am I to say? ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour. 28 Father, glorify Your name.” Then a voice came out of heaven: “I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.” 29 So the crowd who stood by and heard it were saying that it had thundered; others were saying, “An angel has spoken to Him!” 30 Jesus responded and said, “This voice has not come for My sake, but for yours. 31 Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. 32 And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to Myself.” 33 Now He was saying this to indicate what kind of death He was going to die.

### **The Gospel of the Lord**

**On March 17 we celebrate the life of Patrick, Bishop and Missionary of Ireland. Read from A Great Cloud of Witnesses.**

Patrick was born into a Christian family somewhere on the northwest coast of Britain in about 390. His grandfather had been a Christian priest and his father, Calpornius, a deacon. Calpornius was an important official in the late Roman imperial government of Britain. It was not unusual in this post-Constantinian period for such state officials to be in holy orders. When Patrick was about sixteen, he was captured by a band of Irish slave-raiders. He was carried off to Ireland and forced to serve as a shepherd. When he was about twenty-one, he escaped and returned to Britain, where he was educated as a Christian. He tells us that he took holy orders as both presbyter and bishop, although no particular see is known as his at this time. A vision then called him to return to Ireland. This he did about the year 431.

Tradition holds that Patrick landed not far from the place of his earlier captivity, near what is now known as Downpatrick (a “down” or “dun” is a fortified hill, the stronghold of a local Irish king). He then began a remarkable process of missionary conversion throughout the country that continued until his death, probably in 461. He made his appeal to the local kings and through them to their tribes. Christianizing the old pagan religion as he went,

Patrick erected Christian churches over sites already regarded as sacred, had crosses carved on old druidic pillars, and put sacred wells and springs under the protection of Christian saints.

Many legends of Patrick's Irish missionary travels possess substrata of truth, especially those telling of his conversion of the three major Irish High Kings. At Armagh, he is said to have established his principal church. To this day, Armagh is regarded as the primatial see of all Ireland.

Two works are attributed to Patrick: an autobiographical Confession, in which he tells us, among other things, that he was criticized by his contemporaries for lack of learning, and a Letter to Coroticus, a British chieftain. The Lorica or St. Patrick's Breastplate ("I bind unto myself today") is probably not his, but it expresses his faith and zeal.

**Let us pray:** Almighty God, in your providence you chose your servant Patrick to be the apostle of the Irish people, to bring those who were wandering in darkness and error to the true light and knowledge of you: Grant us so to walk in that light that we may come at last to the light of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**