

Sunday, March 7, 2010
Third Sunday in Lent
Holy Communion

Worship Assistants

FIRST READING: Isaiah 55:1-9

A reading from _____.

To those who have experienced long years in exile, the return to their homeland is a celebration of abundant life. God calls them into an everlasting covenant of love. Those who return to the Lord will enjoy new life and forgiveness, because God's ways are not our ways.

Ho, everyone who thirsts,

come to the waters;
and you that have no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.

²Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labor for that which does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.

³Incline your ear, and come to me;
listen, so that you may live.
I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David.

⁴See, I made him a witness to the peoples,
a leader and commander for the peoples.

⁵See, you shall call nations that you do not know,
and nations that do not know you shall run to you,
because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel,
for he has glorified you.

⁶Seek the LORD while he may be found,
call upon him while he is near;

⁷let the wicked forsake their way,
and the unrighteous their thoughts;
let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them,
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

⁸For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.

⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.\

Word of God, word of life.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 63:1–8

Refrain: O God, eagerly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you. (Ps. 63:1)

¹O God, you are my God; eager-¹ly I seek you;
my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there¹ is
no water.

²**Therefore I have gazed upon you in your¹ holy place,
that I might behold your power¹ and your glory.**

³For your steadfast love is better than¹ life itself;
my lips shall¹ give you praise.

⁴**So will I bless you as long¹ as I live
and lift up my hands¹ in your name. R**

⁵My spirit is content, as with the rich-¹est of foods,
and my mouth praises you with¹ joyful lips,

⁶**when I remember you up-¹ on my bed,
and meditate on you in¹ the night watches.**

⁷For you have¹ been my helper,
and under the shadow of your wings I¹ will rejoice.

⁸**My whole being¹ clings to you;
your right hand¹ holds me fast. R**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 10:1–13

A reading from _____.

Paul uses images from Hebrew story and prophecy to speak the truth of Jesus Christ: He is our rock, our water, our food, and our drink. Christ is the living sign of God's faithfulness.

I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ²and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. ⁵Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

⁶Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. ⁷Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play." ⁸We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. ⁹We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. ¹⁰And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. ¹¹These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. ¹²So if you

think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. ¹³No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Luke 13:1–9

The holy gospel according to _____.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Asked about current tragic events, Jesus turns a lesson about whether suffering is deserved into a hard call to obedience. He then tells a parable that holds out hope that the timeline for ultimate judgment will be tempered by patience.

At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. ²He asked them, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans?" ³No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. ⁴Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them — do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem?" ⁵No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did."

⁶Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. ⁷So he said to the gardener, 'See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?' ⁸He replied, 'Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. ⁹If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Gathered by the Spirit, let us return to the Lord our God and pray for the church, the world, and all who yearn for new life.

Merciful God, you call your church to be a witness to your steadfast love. Grant that the work of ministers, teachers, missionaries, relief workers, and all the baptized may be faithful and fruitful.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Creating God, all you have made is good. Teach us to care for the earth, the sea, the sky, and all living things with love and reverence. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Just God, your ways are beyond human understanding. Give those in positions of authority wisdom and compassion for all who suffer. Bring relief to victims of natural disasters, violence, and oppression (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Faithful God, hear the cries of the sick and dying, the hungry and homeless, the lost and forgotten (*especially*). Bring healing and hope, food and shelter, love and compassion to all in need. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Loving God, teach us to seek your will in all things. Deepen our faith and give us strength to follow wherever you lead us. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Eternal God, we give you thanks for all the faithful departed who now rest in you (*especially Perpetua and Felicity and their companions, the martyrs at Carthage, whom we commemorate today*). Grant that we might follow their example of faithful witness. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Almighty God, you have commanded us to pray, and you promise to hear us. Hear the prayers of your people and grant us all that we need, for the sake of the one in whose name we pray, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

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