

Sunday, March 21, 2010
Fifth Sunday in Lent
Holy Communion

Worship Assistants

FIRST READING: Isaiah 43:16–21

A reading from _____.

The prophet declares that long ago the Lord performed mighty deeds and delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage through the waters of the sea. Now, the Lord is about to do a new thing, bringing the exiles out of Babylon and through the wilderness in a new exodus.

- ¹⁶Thus says the LORD,
 who makes a way in the sea,
 a path in the mighty waters,
¹⁷who brings out chariot and horse,
 army and warrior;
 they lie down, they cannot rise,
 they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:
¹⁸Do not remember the former things,
 or consider the things of old.
¹⁹I am about to do a new thing;
 now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
 I will make a way in the wilderness
 and rivers in the desert.
²⁰The wild animals will honor me,
 the jackals and the ostriches;
 for I give water in the wilderness,
 rivers in the desert,
 to give drink to my chosen people,
²¹the people whom I formed for myself
 so that they might declare my praise.\

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 126

Refrain: Those who sowed with tears will reap with songs of joy. (Ps. 126:5)

¹When the LORD restored the for-¹ tunes of Zion,
 then were we like ¹ those who dream.

²Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with ¹ shouts of joy.

Then they said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."

³The LORD has done great things for us,
and we are glad indeed.

**⁴Restore our fortunes, O LORD,
like the watercourses of the Negeb. R**

⁵Those who sowed with tears
will reap with songs of joy.

**⁶Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed,
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves. R**

SECOND READING: Philippians 3:4b–14

A reading from _____.

Writing to Christians in Philippi, Paul admits that his heritage and reputation could give him more reason than most people to place confidence in his spiritual pedigree. But the overwhelming grace of God in Jesus calls Paul to a new set of values.

^{4b}

If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: ⁵circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

⁷Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. ⁸More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. ¹⁰I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, ¹¹if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

¹²Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: John 12:1–8

The holy gospel according to _____.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Judas willfully misinterprets as waste Mary's extravagant act of anointing Jesus' feet with costly perfume. Jesus recognizes that her lavish gift is both an expression of love and an anticipation of his burial.

Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ²There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. ³Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. ⁴But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, ⁵Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor? ⁶(He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) ⁷Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. ⁸You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

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.

God who makes all things new, be with those seeking the life-giving water of baptism. Renew our faith, that we might prepare the way for others. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Awaken plants and animals from their winter rest, and bless the work of those who toil on land and sea. Grant us favorable weather and a spring season filled with the promise of an abundant harvest. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Raise up faithful leaders who will govern with wisdom. Defend those who are victims of war, poverty, or injustice (*especially*). Show all nations the way of peace. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Bring wholeness to those who are broken, healing to those who are sick, hope to those who are despondent, and comfort to those who are afraid (*especially*), that they may know your loving care. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Create a spirit of hospitality within your church. Grant that we might welcome others as you have welcomed us. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Keep us mindful of the faithful witnesses who lived and died in you (*especially Thomas Cranmer, Bishop of Canterbury, whom we commemorate today*). Grant us grace always to trust in you, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, and life everlasting. 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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