

Readings + 17th Sunday after Pentecost, Lect. 25 B + Sept. 19, 2021

Prayer of the Day

O God, our teacher and guide, you draw us to yourself and welcome us as beloved children. Help us to lay aside all envy and selfish ambition, that we may walk in your ways of wisdom and understanding as servants of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

First Reading Jeremiah 11:18-20

¹⁸ It was the LORD who made it known to me, and I knew; then you showed me their evil deeds.
¹⁹ But I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter. And I did not know it was against me that they devised schemes, saying, "Let us destroy the tree with its fruit, let us cut him off from the land of the living, so that his name will no longer be remembered!"
²⁰ But you, O LORD of hosts, who judge righteously, who try the heart and the mind, let me see your retribution upon them, for to you I have committed my cause.

Psalmody Psalm 54

Save me, O God, by your name; in your might, defend my cause.

Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth.

For strangers have risen up against me, and the ruthless have sought my life, those who have no regard for God.

Behold, God is my helper; it is the Lord who sustains my life.

Render evil to those who spy on me; in your faithfulness, destroy them.

I will offer you a freewill sacrifice and praise your name, O LORD, for it is good.

For you have rescued me from every trouble, and my eye looks down on my enemies.

Second Reading James 3:13 – 4:3, 7-8a

¹³ Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done

with gentleness born of wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. ¹⁵ Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. ¹⁶ For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. ¹⁷ But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. ¹⁸ And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.

4 ¹ Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? ² You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures.

⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

Holy Gospel Mark 9:30-37

The first part of this reading, 30-33, is in Matthew and Luke as well, Jesus' second prediction of his death. All three are similar, but Mark includes Jesus' secrecy in travel (v. 30) and Mark and Luke both relate that the disciples didn't understand his prediction and were afraid to ask Jesus about it.

The second part of the reading is in all three synoptics as well. Mark has a more extensive introduction, tying this episode into the disciples' speaking of which of them was greatest. Mark doesn't have Matthew's verse where Jesus says all who follow him must become like little children.

³⁰ Jesus and his disciples went on and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; ³¹ for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again." ³² But

they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him.

³³ Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, “What were you arguing about on the way?” ³⁴ But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. ³⁵ He sat down,

called the twelve, and said to them, “Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.” ³⁶ Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, ³⁷ “Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.”