

# Readings + 16<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost, Lect. 23 B + Sept. 8, 2024

## Prayer of the Day

Gracious God, throughout the ages you transform sickness into health and death into life. Open us to the power of your presence, and make us a people ready to proclaim your promises to the whole world, through Jesus Christ, our healer and Lord. Amen

## First Reading Isaiah 35:4-7a

<sup>4</sup>Say to those who are of a fearful heart,  
“Be strong, do not fear!  
Here is your God.  
Your God will come with vengeance,  
with terrible recompense.  
God will come and save you.”  
<sup>5</sup>Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;  
<sup>6</sup>then the lame shall leap like a deer,  
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.  
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,  
and streams in the desert;  
<sup>7</sup>the burning sand shall become a pool,  
and the thirsty ground springs of water.

## Psalmody Psalm 146

Hallelujah! Praise the LORD, O my soul!  
**I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will  
sing praises to my God while I have my  
being.**  
Put not your trust in rulers, in mortals in whom  
there is no help.  
**When they breathe their last, they return to  
earth, and in that day their thoughts perish.**  
Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for  
their help, whose hope is in the LORD their  
God;  
**who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all  
that is in them; who keeps promises forever;**  
who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and  
food to those who hunger. The LORD sets the  
captive free.  
**The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the  
LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;  
the LORD loves the righteous.**

The LORD cares for the stranger; the LORD  
sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates  
the way of the wicked.

**The LORD shall reign forever, your God, O  
Zion, throughout all generations.  
Hallelujah!**

## Second Reading James 2:1-10, 14-17

<sup>1</sup>My dear family, do not claim the faith of our  
Lord Jesus Christ of glory while showing  
partiality. <sup>2</sup>For if a person with gold rings and in  
fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a  
poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, <sup>3</sup>and  
if you take notice of the one wearing the fine  
clothes and say, “Have a seat here in a good  
place, please,” while to the one who is poor you  
say, “Stand there,” or, “Sit by my footstool,”  
<sup>4</sup>have you not made distinctions among  
yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?  
<sup>5</sup>Listen, my beloved ones. Has not God chosen  
the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be  
heirs of the dominion promised to those who  
love God? <sup>6</sup>But you have dishonored the poor  
person. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it  
not they who drag you into the courts? <sup>7</sup>Is it not  
they who blaspheme the excellent name that was  
invoked over you?

<sup>8</sup>If you really fulfill the royal law according to  
the scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as  
yourself,” you do well. <sup>9</sup>But if you show partiality,  
you commit sin and are convicted by the law as  
transgressors. <sup>10</sup>For whoever keeps the whole law  
but fails in one point has become accountable for  
all of it.

<sup>14</sup>What good is it, my dear family, if someone  
claims to have faith but does not have works?  
Surely that faith cannot save, can it? <sup>15</sup>If one of  
your siblings is naked and lacks daily food <sup>16</sup>and  
one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep  
warm and eat your fill,” and yet you do not  
supply their bodily needs, what is the good of  
that? <sup>17</sup>So faith by itself, if it has no works, is  
dead.

## Holy Gospel Mark 7:24-37

*Mark and Matthew both have the first story, but with many different details. Most notably, Jesus doesn't praise her faith in Mark, at least in those words. Only Mark tells the second story, of the Gentile man healed of deafness. And it's worth noting, regarding the first story: Luke doesn't tell this story. Rather, he claims Jesus intended to go to both Jews and Gentiles from the beginning.*

<sup>24</sup> ¶Jesus<sup>7</sup> set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, <sup>25</sup> but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. <sup>26</sup> Now the woman was a gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. <sup>27</sup> Jesus said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs."<sup>28</sup> But she answered him, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."

<sup>29</sup> Then Jesus said to her, "For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter."

<sup>30</sup> And when she went home, she found the child lying on the bed and the demon gone.

<sup>31</sup> Then Jesus returned from the region of Tyre and went by way of Sidon toward the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. <sup>32</sup> They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech, and they begged him to lay his hand on him. <sup>33</sup> Jesus took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue.

<sup>34</sup> Then looking up to heaven, Jesus sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened."

<sup>35</sup> And his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. <sup>36</sup> Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one, but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. <sup>37</sup> They were astounded beyond measure, saying, "He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."