

## Readings + 13<sup>th</sup> Sun. after Pentecost, Lect. 23 C + September 7, 2025

### Prayer of the Day

Direct us, O Lord God, in all our doings with your continual help, that in all our works, begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy name; and finally, by your mercy, bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

### First Reading Deuteronomy 30:15-20

*Moses said to the people,* <sup>15</sup> See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. <sup>16</sup> If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the LORD your God, walking in the LORD's ways, and observing God's commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. <sup>17</sup> But if your heart turns away and you do not hear but are led astray to bow down to other deities and serve them, <sup>18</sup> I declare to you today that you shall certainly perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess.

<sup>19</sup> I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, <sup>20</sup> loving the LORD your God, obeying the LORD, and holding fast to your God; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the LORD swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

### Psalmody Psalm 1

Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked, nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats of the scornful! **Their delight is in the law of the LORD, and they meditate on God's teaching day and night.**

They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in due season, with leaves that do not wither; everything they do shall prosper.

**It is not so with the wicked; they are like chaff which the wind blows away.**

Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when judgment comes, nor the sinner in the council of the righteous.

**For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked shall be destroyed.**

### Second Reading Philemon 1-21

*Paul writes:*

<sup>1</sup> Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to our beloved coworker Philemon, <sup>2</sup> to our sister Apphia, to our fellow soldier Archippus, and to the church in your house:

<sup>3</sup> Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>4</sup> I thank my God always when I mention you in my prayers, <sup>5</sup> because I hear of your love for all the saints and your faith toward the Lord Jesus.

<sup>6</sup> I pray that the partnership of your faith may become effective as you comprehend all the good that we share in Christ. <sup>7</sup> I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother.

<sup>8</sup> For this reason, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do the right thing, <sup>9</sup> yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love – and I, Paul, do this as an old man, and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. <sup>10</sup> I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. <sup>11</sup> Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful to you and to me. <sup>12</sup> I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. <sup>13</sup> I wanted to keep him with me, so that he might minister to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel; <sup>14</sup> but I preferred to do nothing without your consent in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. <sup>15</sup> Perhaps this is the reason Onesimus was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back for the long term, <sup>16</sup> no longer as an enslaved person but more than a slave, a beloved brother –

especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

<sup>17</sup> So if you consider me your partner, welcome Onesimus as you would welcome me.

<sup>18</sup> If he has wronged you in any way or owes you anything, charge that to me. <sup>19</sup> I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self.

<sup>20</sup> Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. <sup>21</sup> Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask.

*Not included in the assigned reading (but we're reading it Sunday anyway), the rest of the letter:*

<sup>22</sup> One thing more – prepare a guest room for me, for I am hoping through your prayers to be restored to you.

<sup>23</sup> Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends greetings to you, <sup>24</sup> and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my coworkers.

<sup>25</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

## Holy Gospel Luke 14:25-33

*Luke and Matthew both have this part:*

<sup>25</sup> Now large crowds were traveling with Jesus; and he turned and said to them, <sup>26</sup> “Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, spouse and children, siblings, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. <sup>27</sup> Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

*Only Luke continues with this parable:*

<sup>28</sup> For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether there is enough to complete it? <sup>29</sup> Otherwise, when a foundation has been laid and the builder is not able to finish the building, all who see it will begin to ridicule the builder, <sup>30</sup> saying, “This person began to build and was not able to finish.” <sup>31</sup> Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? <sup>32</sup> If he cannot, then while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. <sup>33</sup> So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.”