

THE WORD OF THE LORD : TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

*At the Liturgy at Nine-Thirty*  
THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

*At the heart of today's Old Testament reading is God's call for sinners to forsake the ways of evil and turn to the Lord, fully assured that God's pardon is freely available. With its emphasis on complete confidence and trust in God, Psalm 63 forms a fitting response. In the Epistle, Paul recalls Israel's experience in the wilderness as a caution against false confidence and a reminder to flee the sins of idolatry and self-indulgence. In the Gospel we have an urgent call to repentance, one of the most compelling in the New Testament.*

COLLECT OF THE DAY

*Presider:* Father of mercy, alone we have no power in ourselves to help ourselves. When we are discouraged by our weakness, strengthen us to follow Christ, our pattern and our hope; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

*People:* Amen.

COLLECT OF LENT

*Presider* Almighty and everlasting God, you despise nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our brokenness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

*People:* Amen.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 55.1-9

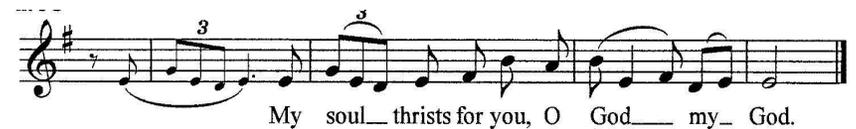
Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline 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. See, I made him a witness to the

peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. See, 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. Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; let 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. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

The word of the Lord

*R/. Thanks be to God*

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: 63.1-8



O God, you are my God; eagerly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you, as in a barren and dry land where there is no water. Therefore I have gazed upon you in your holy place, that I might behold your power and your glory. *R/.*

For your loving-kindness is better than life itself; my lips shall give you praise. So I will bless you as long as I live and lift up my hands in your name. *R/.*

My soul is content, as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth praises you with joyful lips, when I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the night watches. *R/.*

For you have been my helper, and under the shadow of your wings I will rejoice. My soul clings to you; your right hand holds me fast. *R/.*

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 10.1-13

I want you to be aware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness. Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. Do 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." We must not indulge in immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. These 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. So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. No 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.

The word of the Lord

*R/. Thanks be to God*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: Matthew 4.17

Praise to you, Lord, king of eternal glory. Repent, says the Lord, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Praise to you, Lord, king of eternal glory.

GOSPEL: Luke 13.1-9

*R/. Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ*

At that time there were some present who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. He asked them, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. Or those

eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell of them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did." Then 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. So 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?' He replied, 'Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

The Gospel of Christ

*R/. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ*

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

*Presider:* Gracious God, we know your power to triumph over weakness. May we who ask forgiveness be ready to forgive one another, in the name of Jesus the Lord.

*People:* Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

*Presider:* God of mercy and forgiveness, may we who share this sacrament live together in unity and peace, in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

*People:* Amen.