

3rd Sunday after Pentecost

Proper 6, Year B

The Collect of the Day

Keep, O Lord, your household the Church in your steadfast faith and love, that through your grace we may proclaim your truth with boldness, and minister your justice with compassion; for the sake of our Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*

A Reading from the Book of Ezekiel 31:1-14

In the eleventh year, in the third month, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me: ² "Son of man, say to Pharaoh king of Egypt and to his multitude: "Whom are you like in your greatness? ³ Behold, I will liken you to a cedar in Lebanon, with fair branches and forest shade, and of great height, its top among the clouds. ⁴ The waters nourished it, the deep made it grow tall, making its rivers flow round the place of its planting, sending forth its streams to all the trees of the forest. ⁵ So it towered high above all the trees of the forest; its boughs grew large and its branches long, from abundant water in its shoots. ⁶ All the birds of the air made their nests in its boughs; under its branches all the beasts of the field brought forth their young; and under its shadow dwelt all great nations.... ¹⁰ "Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because it towered high and set its top among the clouds, and its heart was proud of its height, ¹¹ I will give it into the hand of a mighty one of the nations; he shall surely deal with it as its wickedness deserves. I have cast it out. ¹² Foreigners, the most terrible of the nations, will cut it down and leave it. On the mountains and in all the valleys its branches will fall, and its boughs will lie broken in all the watercourses of the land; and all the peoples of the earth will go from its shadow and leave it. ¹³ Upon its ruin will dwell all the birds of the air, and upon its branches will be all the beasts of the field. ¹⁴ All this is in order that

no trees by the waters may grow to lofty height or set their tops among the clouds, and that no trees that drink water may reach up to them in height; for they are all given over to death, to the nether world among mortal men, with those who go down to the Pit.

Psalm 92:1-4, 11-14

Bonum est confiteri

- 1 It is a good thing to give thanks to the Lord, *
and to sing praises to your Name, O Most High;
- 2 To tell of your loving-kindness early in the morning *
and of your faithfulness in the night season;
- 3 On the psaltery, and on the lyre, *
and to the melody of the harp.
- 4 For you have made me glad by your acts, O Lord; *
and I shout for joy because of the works of your hands.
- 11 The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree, *
and shall spread abroad like a cedar of Lebanon.
- 12 Those who are planted in the house of the Lord *
shall flourish in the courts of our God;
- 13 They shall still bear fruit in old age; *
they shall be green and succulent;
- 14 That they may show how upright the Lord is, *
my Rock, in whom there is no fault.

A Reading from 2 Corinthians 5:1-10

For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. ² Here indeed we groan, and long to put on our heavenly dwelling, ³ so that by putting it on we may not be found naked. ⁴ For while we are still in this tent, we sigh with anxiety; not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. ⁵ He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. ⁶ So we are always of good courage; we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord,

⁷ for we walk by faith, not by sight. ⁸ We are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. ⁹ So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive good or evil, according to what he has done in the body.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. Mark 4:26-34

Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed upon the ground, ²⁷ and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he knows not how. ²⁸ The earth produces of itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. ²⁹ But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come." ³⁰ And he said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? ³¹ It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; ³² yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade." ³³ With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; ³⁴ he did not speak to them without a parable, but privately to his own disciples he explained everything.