

COLLECT: (*Remain Standing*)

Strengthen and protect, O God, all those who suffer for their fidelity to Jesus Christ; that, like your servant Toyohiko Kagawa, they might persevere in seeking and serving Christ in all persons, and work tirelessly for the advancement of your kingdom, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be all honor and glory now and forever. **Amen.**

First Reading: Exodus 32:21-34 (*Please be seated*)

Reader: A reading from the book of Exodus.

Moses said to Aaron, 'What did this people do to you that you have brought so great a sin upon them?' And Aaron said, 'Do not let the anger of my lord burn hot; you know the people, that they are bent on evil. They said to me, "Make us gods, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." So I said to them, "Whoever has gold, take it off"; so they gave it to me, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf!'

When Moses saw that the people were running wild (for Aaron had let them run wild, to the derision of their enemies), then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, 'Who is on the Lord's side? Come to me!' And all the sons of Levi gathered around him. He said to them, 'Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, "Put your sword on your side, each of you! Go back and forth from gate to gate throughout the camp, and each of you kill your brother, your friend, and your neighbour."' The sons of Levi did as Moses commanded, and about three thousand of the people fell on that day. Moses said, 'Today you have ordained yourselves for the service of the Lord, each one at the cost of a son or a brother, and so have brought a blessing on yourselves this day.'

On the next day Moses said to the people, 'You have sinned a great sin. But now I will go up to the Lord; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin.' So Moses returned to the Lord and said, 'Alas, this people has sinned a great sin; they have made for themselves gods of gold. But now, if you will only forgive their sin—but if not, blot me out of the book that you have written.' But the Lord said to Moses, 'Whoever has sinned against me I will blot out of my book. But now go, lead the people to the place about which I have spoken to you; see, my angel shall go in front of you. Nevertheless, when the day comes for punishment, I will punish them for their sin.'

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God

Psalm

Reader: Let us pray together the words of **Psalm 45.**

1 My heart is stirring with a noble song;
let me recite what I have fashioned for the king; *
my tongue shall be the pen of a skilled writer.

2 You are the fairest of men; *
grace flows from your lips,
because God has blessed you for ever.

3 Strap your sword upon your thigh, O mighty warrior, *
in your pride and in your majesty.

4 Ride out and conquer in the cause of truth *
and for the sake of justice.

5 Your right hand will show you marvelous things; *
your arrows are very sharp, O mighty warrior.

6 The peoples are falling at your feet, *
and the king's enemies are losing heart.

7 Your throne, O God, endures for ever and ever, *
a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of your kingdom;
you love righteousness and hate iniquity.

8 Therefore God, your God, has anointed you *
with the oil of gladness above your fellows.

9 All your garments are fragrant with myrrh, aloes, and cassia, *
and the music of strings from ivory palaces makes you glad.

10 Kings' daughters stand among the ladies of the court; *

on your right hand is the queen,
adorned with the gold of Ophir.

11 "Hear, O daughter; consider and listen closely; *

forget your people and your father's house.

12 The king will have pleasure in your beauty; *

he is your master; therefore do him honor.

13 The people of Tyre are here with a gift; *
the rich among the people seek your favor."

14 All glorious is the princess as she enters; *
her gown is cloth-of-gold.

15 In embroidered apparel she is brought to the king; *

after her the bridesmaids follow in procession.

16 With joy and gladness they are brought, *
and enter into the palace of the king.

17 "In place of fathers, O king, you shall have sons; *

you shall make them princes over all the earth.

18 I will make your name to be remembered from one generation to another; *
therefore nations will praise you for ever and ever."

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 *(Please be seated)*

Reader: A reading from the first book of Thessalonians.

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

Grace to you and peace.

We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labour of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of people we proved to be among you for your sake. And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place where your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Matthew 5:11-16 *(Please stand as you are able)*

Priest: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People: **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

‘Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

‘You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

‘You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Deacon or Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Christ