

# Tuesday, July 9<sup>th</sup>

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## **COLLECT: (*Remain Standing*)**

Lord God Almighty, you have made all the peoples of the earth for your glory, to serve you in freedom and in peace: Give to the people of our country a zeal for justice and the strength of forbearance, that we may use our liberty in accordance with your gracious will; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## **First Reading: Numbers 35:1-3, 9-15, 30-34 (*Please be seated*)**

Reader: A reading from the book of Numbers.

In the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho, the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Command the Israelites to give, from the inheritance that they possess, towns for the Levites to live in; you shall also give to the Levites pasture lands surrounding the towns. The towns shall be theirs to live in, and their pasture lands shall be for their cattle, for their livestock, and for all their animals.

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to the Israelites, and say to them: When you cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan, then you shall select cities to be cities of refuge for you, so that a slayer who kills a person without intent may flee there. The cities shall be for you a refuge from the avenger, so that the slayer may not die until there is a trial before the congregation.

The cities that you designate shall be six cities of refuge for you: you shall designate three cities beyond the Jordan, and three cities in the land of Canaan, to be cities of refuge. These six cities shall serve as refuge for the Israelites, for the resident or transient alien among them, so that anyone who kills a person without intent may flee there.

If anyone kills another, the murderer shall be put to death on the evidence of witnesses; but no one shall be put to death on the testimony of a single witness. Moreover, you shall accept no ransom for the life of a murderer who is subject to the death penalty; a murderer must be put to death. Nor shall you accept ransom for one who has fled to a city of refuge, enabling the fugitive to return to live in the land before the death of the high priest. You shall not pollute the land in which you live; for blood pollutes the land, and no expiation can be made for the land, for the blood that is shed in it, except by the blood of the one who shed it. You shall not defile the land in which you live, in which I also dwell; for I the Lord dwell among the Israelites.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God**

## Psalm

Reader: Let us pray together the words of **Psalm 6**.

1 Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger; \*  
do not punish me in your wrath.

2 Have pity on me, Lord, for I am weak; \*  
heal me, Lord, for my bones are racked.

3 My spirit shakes with terror; \*  
how long, O Lord, how long?

4 Turn, O Lord, and deliver me; \*  
save me for your mercy's sake.

5 For in death no one remembers you; \*  
and who will give you thanks in the grave?

6 I grow weary because of my groaning; \*  
every night I drench my bed

and flood my couch with tears.

7 My eyes are wasted with grief \*  
and worn away because of all my enemies.

8 Depart from me, all evildoers, \*  
for the Lord has heard the sound of my  
weeping.

9 The Lord has heard my supplication; \*  
the Lord accepts my prayer.

10 All my enemies shall be confounded and  
quake with fear; \*  
they shall turn back and suddenly be put to  
shame.

## **Romans 8:31-39** *(Please be seated)*

Reader: A reading from the book of Romans.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written,

'For your sake we are being killed all day long;  
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.'

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

## **Matthew 23:13-26** *(Please stand as you are able)*

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

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

‘But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you lock people out of the kingdom of heaven. For you do not go in yourselves, and when others are going in, you stop them. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cross sea and land to make a single convert, and you make the new convert twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.

‘Woe to you, blind guides, who say, “Whoever swears by the sanctuary is bound by nothing, but whoever swears by the gold of the sanctuary is bound by the oath.” You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the sanctuary that has made the gold sacred? And you say, “Whoever swears by the altar is bound by nothing, but whoever swears by the gift that is on the altar is bound by the oath.” How blind you are! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred? So whoever swears by the altar, swears by it and by everything on it; and whoever swears by the sanctuary, swears by it and by the one who dwells in it; and whoever swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by the one who is seated upon it.

‘Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint, dill, and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. It is these you ought to have practised without neglecting the others. You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel!

‘Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup, so that the outside also may become clean.

Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.

**All: Praise to you, Lord Christ**