

Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost

17 September 2023

1st Reading

Exodus 14.19-31

¹⁹ The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. ²⁰ It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night. ²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. ²² The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. ²³ The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. ²⁴ At the morning watch the Lord in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. ²⁵ He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, 'Let us flee from the Israelites, for the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt.' ²⁶ Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers.' ²⁷ So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. ²⁸ The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. ²⁹ But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. ³⁰ Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹ Israel saw the great work that the Lord did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

Psalm

Psalm 114

- ¹ When Israel came out of Egypt:
and the house of Jacob from among a people
of an alien tongue,
- ² Judah became his sanctuary:
and Israel his dominion.
- ³ The sea saw that, and fled:
Jordan was driven back.
- ⁴ The mountains skipped like rams:
and the little hills like young sheep.
- ⁵ What ailed you, O sea, that you fled:
O Jordan, that you were driven back?
- ⁶ You mountains, that you skipped like rams:
and you little hills like young sheep?
- ⁷ Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord:
at the presence of the God of Jacob,
- ⁸ Who turned the rock into a pool of water:
and the flint-stone into a welling spring.

2nd Reading

Romans 14.1-14

- ¹ Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarrelling over opinions.
- ² Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables.
- ³ Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgement on those who eat; for God has welcomed them.

⁴ Who are you to pass judgement on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵ Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds.

⁶ Those who observe the day, observe it in honour of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honour of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honour of the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷ We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves.

⁸ If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.

⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰ Why do you pass judgement on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgement seat of God.

¹¹ For it is written,

'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.'

¹² So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

¹³ Let us therefore no longer pass judgement on one another, but resolve instead never to put a stumbling-block or hindrance in the way of another.

¹⁴ I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean.

Gospel

Matthew 18.21-35

²¹ Then Peter came and said to him, 'Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?' ²² Jesus said to him, 'Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. ²³ 'For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵ and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the slave

fell on his knees before him, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything." ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, "Pay what you owe." ²⁹ Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you." ³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt. ³¹ When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, "You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?" ³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he should pay his entire debt. ³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.'