

Fourth Sunday After Epiphany

28 January 2024

Collect

God of compassion,
you have shown us in Christ
that your love is never ending:
enable us both to love you with all our heart
and to love one another as Christ loved us.
Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

1st Reading

Deuteronomy 18.15-20

¹⁵ The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. ¹⁶ This is what you requested of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: 'If I hear the voice of the Lord my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die.' ¹⁷ Then the Lord replied to me: 'They are right in what they have said. ¹⁸ I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. ¹⁹ Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. ²⁰ But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die.'

Psalm

Psalm 111

¹ O praise the Lord. I will praise the Lord
with my whole heart:

- in the company of the upright
and among the congregation.
- ² The works of the Lord are great:
and studied by all who take delight in them.
- ³ His deeds are majestic and glorious:
and his righteousness stands for ever.
- ⁴ His marvellous acts have won him a name
to be remembered:
the Lord is gracious and merciful.
- ⁵ He gives food to those that fear him:
he remembers his covenant for ever.
- ⁶ He showed his people the power of his acts:
in giving them the heritage of the heathen.
- ⁷ The works of his hands are faithful and just:
and all his commandments are sure;
- ⁸ They stand firm for ever and ever:
they are done in faithfulness and in truth.
- ⁹ He sent redemption to his people,
he ordained his covenant for ever:
holy is his name and worthy to be feared.
- ¹⁰ The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,
and of good understanding are those
that keep his commandments:
his praise shall endure for ever.

2nd Reading

1 Corinthians 8.1-13

- ¹ Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that 'all of us possess knowledge.' Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.
- ² Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; ³ but anyone who loves God is known by him. ⁴ Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that 'no idol in the world really exists', and that 'there is no God but one.'
- ⁵ Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords— ⁶ yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all

things and through whom we exist. ⁷ It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. ⁸ 'Food will not bring us close to God.' We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. ⁹ But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling-block to the weak. ¹⁰ For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? ¹¹ So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. ¹² But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. ¹³ Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

Gospel

Mark 1.21-28

²¹ They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. ²² They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. ²³ Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, ²⁴ and he cried out, 'What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.' ²⁵ But Jesus rebuked him, saying, 'Be silent, and come out of him!' ²⁶ And the unclean spirit, throwing him into convulsions and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷ They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, 'What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.' ²⁸ At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.