

Readings and Prayers for 24 A OT September 17, 2023

Welcome: (Commentator):

Good morning!

Welcome everyone to our Charis Community Sunday Mass. All are truly welcome, and we are excited that you are joining us whether it's your first time praying with us or if you've been with us for a while. The worship aid for Mass is on our website, and we will put the address in the chat for you should you like to pull it up to support your prayer.

We are a Eucharistic people, so we invite you to have bread and wine, in whatever form you have it, with you where you are. Even though we are in many locations, we affirm that we are one table of believers.

Today the Holy Spirit gathers us together in this place to listen to a new commandment. Once again we are challenged to love one another and to extend forgiveness to our brothers and sisters.

Let us offer praise and thanks to God as we begin our prayer in song.

A reading from the Book of Sirach

Wrath and anger are hateful things,
yet the sinner hugs them tight.
The vengeful will suffer the vengeance of the Most High,
for God remembers their sins in detail.
Forgive your neighbor's injustice;
then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven.

Could anyone nourish anger against another
and expect healing from God?
Could one refuse mercy to another like oneself,
and then seek pardon for one's own sins?
If one who is but flesh cherishes wrath,
who will forgive that one's sins?

Remember your last days, set enmity aside;
remember death and decay, and cease from sin!
Think of the commandments, and hate not your neighbor;
remember the Most High's covenant, and overlook faults.

The Word of God.

R/. Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: (LECTOR #2)

Romans 14:1-12

A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans

Welcome anyone who is weak in faith, but not for disputes over opinions. One person believes that one may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. The one who eats must not despise the one who abstains, and the one who abstains must not pass judgment on the one who eats; for God has welcomed him.

Who are you to pass judgment on someone else's servant? Before their own master they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

[For] one person considers one day more important than another, while another person considers all days alike. Let everyone be fully persuaded in their own mind.

Whoever observes the day, observes it for the Lord. Also whoever eats, eats for the Lord, and gives thanks to God; while whoever abstains, abstains for the Lord and gives thanks to God.

None of us lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself. For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

For this is why Christ died and came to life, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. Why then do you judge others? Or you, why do you look down on others? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written: As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bend before me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." So [then] each of us shall give an account of ourselves [to God].

The Word of God.

R/. Thanks be to God.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Peter approached Jesus and asked him,
"Rabbi, if my brother or sister sins against me,
how often must I forgive?
As many as seven times?"

Jesus answered, "I say to you, not seven times
but seventy-seven times.
That is why the realm of heaven may be likened to a ruler
who decided to settle accounts with the servants of the house.
When the accounting began,
a debtor was brought in who owed the ruler a huge amount.
Since the debtor had no way of paying it back,
the ruler ordered the debtor to be sold,
along with the debtor's family and their property,
in payment of the debt.
At that, the servant fell down, did the ruler homage, and said,
'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full.'
Moved with compassion the ruler in charge of that servant
released the debtor and forgave the loan.

"When the first servant left, he found one of the other servants
who owed him a much smaller amount.
Seizing this other servant by the throat, the first servant demanded,
'Pay back what you owe.'
On bended knees, the second servant pleaded,
'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.'
But the first servant refused,
and instead had this other servant put in prison
until the debt could be repaid.

"Now when the other servants saw what had happened,
they were deeply disturbed,
and went to the ruler and reported the whole affair.

(continued on the next page)

The ruler then summoned the first servant and said,
 'You wicked servant!
I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to.
Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you?'

Then in anger the ruler handed the first servant over to the torturers
 until the whole debt could be satisfied
"So will my Abba in heaven do to you,
 unless each of you forgives your brothers and sisters from your heart."

The Gospel of Our Savior Jesus Christ.
R/. Praise to you, O Jesus Christ.

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL: (COMMENTATOR)

Commentator:

Liberating God, You are the way, the truth, and the life. It is Your way of love and freedom that invites us to share our brokenness and our celebrations with you. In this spirit we open ourselves to prayer. Our response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

For those who know anger, may they be open and receptive to its message and meaning, and upon receiving the meaning of the anger, transform it for good and for justice. We pray: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

In gratitude for the world's diverse peoples and diverse creation, a holy reflection and symbol of our one table and one cup of interconnectedness. We pray: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

For God's people to embrace love over fear, reconciliation over hostility, we pray: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

In gratitude for the growing and existing works of mercy - Catholic Worker houses, restorative justice projects, among others that carry out our teachings of compassion and forgiveness, we pray: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

For the prayers in and forming in our hearts, for the prayers in our prayer basket, we pray: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

For our own needs and intentions, that we now share with each other and our listening God. For whom and for what would we like to pray today?. We would very much like to pray with you. We will ask the Zoom community to begin. When their prayers are spoken, we will respond "Lord, hear our prayer" We will then do the same here in our worship space. We invite anyone on Zoom who has a prayer to voice to unmute your mike.

[After the prayer has slowed, commentator concludes:]

Brother Jesus, You are our work of mercy, our way to forgiveness of self and forgiveness of others. Help us to be liberated by your teachings of compassion and love. **Amen.**

Prayer after Communion

God of all seasons, as we near the Solstice
we recognize the balance shifting in the world.
We move from summer to autumn in the north,
and from winter into spring in the south.
As the earth is blanketed with greenery and flowers in spring,
moving north into the golds and crimsons and oranges of autumn,
may we be awakened to the new things You are doing all around us.
May we take a moment to appreciate the earth, now,
and how You bring all things in due season.
May we turn back from practices that cause harm to the earth,
that raise temperatures, that pollute our waterways and landscapes.
May we be reminded of the power to call upon
our elected officials to change our ways.
May we remember that in this season,
now is the time when we can do something to help Your beautiful earth,
our only home, so that no season is too hot or too cold, too dry or too wet,
but that all of creation would be in the balance
You set and intended from the beginning of the world.
In Your name, Great Creator, we pray.
Amen.

Invitation to Reconciliation with God and Each Other

As we prepare to celebrate the mystery of Christ's love, let us acknowledge our failures and ask the Lord for pardon and strength.

Lord Jesus, you teach us to forgive and forgive. Lord have mercy.

You are the mercy of God. Christ have mercy.

You are the love of the Father. Lord have mercy.

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

O Lord God, merciful and holy, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen. **Amen.**