

Sunday, November 3, 2024

Lectionary 31, Year B

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you have taught us in your Son that love fulfills the law. Inspire us to love you with all our heart, our soul, our mind, and our strength, and teach us how to love our neighbor as ourselves, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Semicontinuous First Reading: Ruth 1:1-18

Ruth, a Moabite woman, goes above and beyond the call of duty to accompany Naomi, her Israelite mother-in-law, to a new life back in Israel. In loving and tender words, Ruth pledges to stay with Naomi and to adopt Naomi's land and God as her own.

In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to live in the country of Moab, he and his wife and two sons. The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion; they were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. When they had lived there about ten years, both Mahlon and Chilion also died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband. Then she started to return with her daughters-in-law from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had considered his people and given them food. So she set out from the place where she had been living, she and her two daughters-in-law, and they went on their way to go back to the land of Judah. But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back each of you to your mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. The LORD grant that you may find security, each of you in the house of your husband." Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud. They said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters, why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I should have a husband tonight and bear sons, would you then wait until they were grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the LORD has turned against me." Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her. So she said, "See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." But Ruth said, "Do not press me to leave you or to turn back from following you! Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die, I will die—there will I be buried. May the LORD do thus and so to me, and more as well, if even death parts me from you!" When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her.

Word of God. Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 119:1-8 *Happy are they who seek the Lord with all their hearts. (Ps. :)*

Happy are they whose way is blameless, who follow the teaching of the Lord!

Happy are they who observe your decrees and seek you with all their hearts,

who never do any wrong, but always walk in your ways.

You laid down your commandments, that we should fully keep them.

Oh, that my ways were made so direct that I might keep your statutes!

Then I should not be put to shame, when I regard all your commandments.

I will thank you with a true heart, when I have learned your righteous judgments.

I will keep your statutes; do not utterly forsake me.

Second Reading: Hebrews 9:11-14

In ancient systems of worship, temporary forgiveness and purity came through rituals utilizing the blood of sacrificial animals. Now, however, our forgiveness and purity come eternally through the death of Jesus.

When Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation), he entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls, with the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer, sanctifies those who have been defiled so that their flesh is purified, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to worship the living God!

Word of God. Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel: Mark 12:28-34

When a scribe asks Jesus which commandment is first of all, Jesus answers that love of God and love of neighbor are interconnected and define the heart of the kingdom of God.

One of the scribes came near and heard [Jesus and the Sadducees] disputing with one another, and seeing that [Jesus] answered them well, he asked him, "Which commandment is the first of all?" Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." Then the scribe said to him, "You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that 'he is one, and besides him there is no other'; and 'to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength,' and 'to love one's neighbor as oneself,'—this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." After that no one dared to ask him any question.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you oh Christ