

THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

January 31, 2021

The Collect

Traditional

Almighty and everlasting God, who dost govern all things in heaven and earth: Mercifully hear the supplications of thy people, and in our time grant us thy peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemporary

Almighty and everlasting God, you govern all things both in heaven and on earth: Mercifully hear the supplications of your people, and in our time grant us your peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Old Testament Lesson

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

[Moses gathered Israel and said,] "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brethren – him you shall heed – just as you desired of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, or see this great fire any more, lest I die.' And the LORD said to me, 'They have rightly said all that they have spoken. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brethren; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And whoever will not give heed to my words which he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him. But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.'"

Psalm 111

¹ Hallelujah!

I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart, *
in the assembly of the upright, in the congregation.

² Great are the deeds of the LORD! *
they are studied by all who delight in them.

³ His work is full of majesty and splendor, *
and his righteousness endures for ever.

⁴ He makes his marvelous works to be remembered; *
the LORD is gracious and full of compassion.

⁵ He gives food to those who fear him; *
he is ever mindful of his covenant.

⁶ He has shown his people the power of his works *
in giving them the lands of the nations.

⁷ The works of his hands are faithfulness and justice; *
all his commandments are sure.

⁸ They stand fast for ever and ever, *
because they are done in truth and equity.

⁹ He sent redemption to his people;
he commanded his covenant for ever; *
holy and awesome is his Name.

¹⁰ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; *
those who act accordingly have a good understanding;
his praise endures for ever.

The Epistle

1 Corinthians 8:1b-13

“Knowledge” puffs up, but love builds up. If any one imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know. But if one loves God, one is known by him. Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “an idol has no real existence,” and that “there is no God but one.” For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth – as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords” – 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. However, not all possess this knowledge. But some, through being hitherto accustomed to idols, eat food as really offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. Only take care lest this liberty of yours somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. For if any one sees you, a man of knowledge, at table in an idol’s temple, might he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? And so by your knowledge this weak man is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. Thus, sinning against your brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food is a cause of my brother’s falling, I will never eat meat, lest I cause my brother to fall.

The Gospel

Mark 1:21-28

And [Jesus and his disciples] went into Capernaum; and immediately on the sabbath he entered the synagogue and taught. And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes. And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; 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.” But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!” And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, “What is this? A new teaching! With authority he commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.” And at once his fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee.