

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – 8/13/08

INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

Elijah finds the presence of God not in earthquake, wind, or fire, but in the sound of sheer silence. When the disciples face a great storm on the sea, they cry out with fear. Jesus says: "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." Amid the storms of life, we gather to seek the calm presence of Christ that soothes our fears. In comforting words of scripture and in the refreshing bread and cup of the eucharist, God grants us peace and sends us forth to be a sign of God's presence to others.

*After a moment of silent meditation to prepare ourselves for worship,
we will begin the liturgy.*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

Divine Creator, you call your faithful people to share the good news of Jesus Christ. Guide us as we proclaim the joy of your gospel. Hear us, O God;
your mercy is great.

Gracious Creator, ruler of the universe, from chaos you called forth the beauty of creation. Help us to care for the earth so that the land may continue to yield its increase. Hear us, O God;
your mercy is great.

Almighty Creator, author of unity, your desire is for all humanity to live in peace. Give those in authority the ability to govern with care and justice. Hear us, O God;
your mercy is great.

Merciful Creator, source of compassion, you care for the poor, orphans, unemployed, and homeless. Grant them your consolation. Healer of all and giver of care, grant strength to those who are sick. Hear us, O God;
your mercy is great.

Almighty Creator, protector of all life, you have blessed this congregation with many gifts. Lead us to use them with insight and creativity, caring for those in our midst and throughout the world. Hear us, O God;
your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Eternal Creator, our hope in years to come, throughout the ages you have blessed those who confessed you as the one true God. Bring us to eternal rest and everlasting peace with all your faithful servants. Hear us, O God;
your mercy is great.

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.
Amen.

Lector: Please read the introduction, then the citation (i.e.. "The First Reading is from..... chapter of, verses" then the text.)

Introduction

On Mount Horeb, where God had appeared to Moses with typical signs of God's presence--earthquake, wind, and fire--Elijah now experienced God in "sheer silence." God assured Elijah that he is not the only faithful believer. Seven thousand Israelites are still loyal. God instructed Elisha to anoint two men as kings and to anoint Elisha as his own successor.

OLD TESTAMENT READING: I Kings 19:9-18

At that place he came to a cave, and spent the night there.

Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" ¹⁰ He answered, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away." He said, "Go out and stand on the mountain before the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by." Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" He answered, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away." Then the LORD said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael as king over Aram. Also you shall anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king over Israel; and you shall anoint Elisha son of

Shaphat of Abel-meholah as prophet in your place. Whoever escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall kill; and whoever escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall kill. Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him."

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 85:8-13

I will listen to what the LORD God is saying;

for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to you.

**Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you,
that your glory may dwell in our land.**

Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together;
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

**Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth,
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.**

The LORD will indeed grant prosperity,
and our land will yield its increase.

**Righteousness shall go before the LORD
and shall prepare for God a pathway.**

Introduction

A right relationship with God is not something we achieve by heroic efforts. It is a gift received in the proclamation whose content is Jesus Christ. This proclaimed word creates our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence Christian proclamation is an indispensable component of God's saving actions.

NEW TESTAMENT READING: Romans 10:5-15

Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that "the person who does these things will live by them." But the righteousness that comes from faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say?

"The word is near you,

on your lips and in your heart"

(that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. The scripture says, "No one who believes in him will be put to

shame." For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Introduction

Matthew's gospel typically portrays Jesus' disciples as people of "little faith" who fail despite their best intentions. In this story, Matthew shows how Jesus comes to the disciples when they are in trouble and sustains them in their time of fear and doubt.

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 14:22-33

Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid."

Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.