

Sentence

Of Jesus many said, 'What is this wisdom that has been given to him?
What deeds of power are being done by his hands!' *Mark 6.2*

Collect

O Lord our God,
you are always more ready to bestow your good gifts upon us
than we are to seek them;
and more willing to give than we desire or deserve:
in our every need,
grant us the first and best of all your gifts,
the Spirit who makes us your children.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

A reading from the book of the prophet Ezekiel

This is one of four accounts of Ezekiel's call to be God's prophet to a 'rebellious house' who are hostile to his message. The expression 'mortal' is similar to 'son of man' and means humans. Ezekiel stressed the contrast between God's glory and humanity's defiance.

The heavens were opened and I saw visions of God. When I saw this I fell on my face and I heard the voice of someone speaking: He said to me: O mortal, stand up on your feet, and I will speak with you. And when he spoke to me, a spirit entered into me and set me on my feet; and I heard him speaking to me. He said to me, Mortal, I am sending you to the people of Israel, to a nation of rebels who have rebelled against me; they and their ancestors have transgressed against me to this very day. The descendants are impudent and stubborn. I am send-

ing you to them, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD.' Whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house), they shall know that there has been a prophet among them. And you, O mortal, do not be afraid of them, and do not be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns surround you and you live among scorpions; do not be afraid of their words, and do not be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house. You shall speak my words to them, whether they hear or refuse to hear; for they are a rebellious house. But you, mortal, hear what I say to you; do not be rebellious like that rebellious house; open your mouth and eat what I give you. I looked, and a hand was stretched out to me, and a written scroll was in it. He spread it before me; it had writing on the front and on the back, and written on it were words of lamentation and mourning and woe.

Ezekiel 8.7-15

Reader For the word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God

Psalm 123 APBA page 361

This communal psalm, prayed by the assembly is a plea for mercy for the whole community. Notice that God is imaged both as male and female, as master and mistress, who is looked to for mercy by the psalmist. Imaging God as female, though not common, was known in the Hebrew scriptures and in prayer.

A reading from the second letter of Paul to the Corinthians

This letter was written at the height of controversy over Paul's leadership; he relates a mystical experience to validate his ministry and says that a thorn in his flesh (it is not known what this was) keeps him from false elation and thus dependent upon God's grace.

I know a person in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows. And I know that such a person—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows— was caught up into Para-

O God, you have prepared for those who love you such good things as pass our understanding:
pour into our hearts such love toward you, that, loving you above all things, we may obtain your promises which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Pray for the Faithful Departed

We remember before God: Margaret Osmond, Mary Diane Gibson, John Giggins, Margaret Ilona Minchin, Prudence Julia Lanigan, Sheila Elin Joyce (Joyce) Wikkramatileke, Shirley Elizabeth Edwards, Patricia Corless, Elizabeth Weeks, Sheila Tait, Ethel Giggins and Valmai Hingston *whose anniversaries occur this week.*

Commemorations of the week

July 11 Benedict of Nursia (c.480-550). Benedict was the founder of western monasticism; the abbot and founder of Subiaco and Monte Cassino monasteries in Italy and author of the monastic Rule that bears his name. The Rule of St Benedict was orderly, workable and flexible enough to be used widely. It underpins Anglican spirituality, with our regular times of prayer each day and systematic reading of the whole of the scriptures; it has had an enormous influence on spiritual life down the centuries, and is still widely read today by those who seek to live well together in Christian communities and parishes. **July 13 Sydney James Kirkby**, bishop, and pioneer of outback ministry and the Bush Church Aid Society (d. 1935).

This incident has all the feel of an historical story and reminds us that anyone's conversion and growth in faith is through relationship and can never be guaranteed, no matter how impressive the deeds of the evangeliser.

Jesus came to his home town, and his disciples followed him. On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, 'Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?' And they took offence at him. Then Jesus said to them, 'Prophets are not without honour, except in their home town, and among their own kin, and in their own house.' And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. And he was amazed at their unbelief. Then he went about among the villages teaching. He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. He said to them, 'Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.' So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

Mark 6.1-13

Reader For the Gospel of the Lord

ALL Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Bible Readings next week 15 July 2018

Amos 7.7-14 Psalm 85.8-13 Ephesians 1.1-14 Mark 6.14-29

Prayer for the Week

dise and heard things that are not to be told, that no mortal is permitted to repeat. On behalf of such a one I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. But if I wish to boast, I will not be a fool, for I will be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think better of me than what is seen in me or heard from me, even considering the exceptional character of the revelations. Therefore, to keep me from being too elated, a thorn was given to me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, but he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.' So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong. *2 Cor 12.2-10*

Reader May your word live in us.

ALL And bear much fruit to your glory.

Gospel Acclamation

ALL Alleluia! Alleluia!

Cantor The twelve went out and proclaimed that all should repent: they anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them

ALL Alleluia!

Reader The Lord be with you

ALL And also with you

Reader A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark

ALL Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus returns home but is unable to elicit from his sceptical neighbours the faith necessary for salvation. At first they are impressed but then reject him.