

Gospel continued:

³⁰ Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.”’

³¹ He put before them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;

³² it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.’

³³ He told them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.’

³⁴ Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables; without a parable he told them nothing.

³⁵ This was to fulfil what had been spoken through the prophet:

‘I will open my mouth to speak in parables;

I will proclaim what has been hidden from the foundation of the world.’

³⁶ Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, ‘Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.’

³⁷ He answered, ‘The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man;

³⁸ the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one,

³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels.

⁴⁰ Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age.

⁴¹ The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers,

⁴² and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

Prayer and Readings for the SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST 23 JULY 2017

Prayer of the day

Saving God,
in Jesus Christ you opened for us a new and living way into your presence:
give us pure hearts
and constant wills to worship you in spirit and in truth;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

Genesis 28.10-22

¹⁰ Jacob left Beer-sheba and went towards Haran. ¹¹ He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. ¹² And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. ¹³ And the Lord stood beside him and said, ‘I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; ¹⁴ and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. ¹⁵ Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.’ ¹⁶ Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, ‘Surely the Lord is in this place—and I did not know it!’ ¹⁷ And he was afraid, and said, ‘How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.’ ¹⁸ So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. ¹⁹ He called that place Bethel; but the name of the city was Luz at the first. ²⁰ Then Jacob made a

vow, saying, 'If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, ²¹ so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God, ²² and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that you give me I will surely give one-tenth to you.'

Psalm 139.1-11, 23-24

¹ O Lord, you have searched me out and known me:

you know when I sit or when I stand,
you comprehend my thoughts long before.

² You discern my path and the places where I rest:

you are acquainted with all my ways.

³ For there is not a word on my tongue:
but you, Lord, know it altogether.

⁴ You have encompassed me behind and before:

and have laid your hand upon me.

⁵ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me:
so high that I cannot endure it.

⁶ Where shall I go from your spirit:
or where shall I flee from your presence?

⁷ If I ascend into heaven you are there:
if I make my bed in the grave you are there also.

⁸ If I spread out my wings towards the morning:

or dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,

⁹ Even there your hand shall lead me:
and your right hand shall hold me.

¹⁰ If I say 'Surely the darkness will cover me:
and the night will enclose me',

¹¹ The darkness is no darkness with you,
but the night is as clear as the day:
the darkness and the light are both alike.

²³ Search me out, O God, and know my heart:
put me to the proof and know my thoughts.

²⁴ Look well lest there be any way of wickedness in me:
and lead me in the way that is everlasting.

Romans 8.12-25

¹² So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— ¹³ for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴ For all who are led by the Spirit of God

are children of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' ¹⁶ it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him. ¹⁸ I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; ²⁰ for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; ²³ and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Matthew 13.24-43

²⁴ He put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵ but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away.

²⁶ So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well.

²⁷ And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, "Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?"

²⁸ He answered, "An enemy has done this." The slaves said to him, "Then do you want us to go and gather them?"

²⁹ But he replied, "No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them.

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