

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

COLLECT

Grant us, O Lord, we pray thee, to trust in thee with all our heart; seeing that, as thou dost always resist the proud who confide in their own strength, so thou dost not forsake those who make their boast of thy mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

FIRST READING: Isaiah 35:4-7a

Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf un-

stopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water.

Psalm 146

- 1 Hallelujah!
Praise the LORD, O my soul! *
I will praise the LORD as long as
I live; I will sing praises to my
God while I have my being.
- 2 Put not your trust in rulers, nor
in any child of earth, * for
there is no help in them.
- 3 When they breathe their last,
they return to earth, * and in
that day their thoughts perish.
- 4 Happy are they who have the
God of Jacob for their help! *
whose hope is in the LORD
their God;
- 5 Who made heaven and earth, the
seas, and all that is in them; *
who keeps his promise for ever;
- 6 Who gives justice to those
who are oppressed, * and
food to those who hunger.
- 7 The LORD sets the prisoners
free; the LORD opens the eyes
of the blind; * the LORD lifts
up those who are bowed down;
- 8 The LORD loves the righteous;
the LORD cares for the
stranger; * he sustains the
orphan and widow, but frus-
trates the way of the wicked.
- 9 The LORD shall reign for
ever, * your God, O Zion,
throughout all generations.
Hallelujah!

SECOND READING: James 1:17-27

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures. You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves.

For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing. If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

GOSPEL: Mark 7:31-37

Jesus returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to

him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. They were astounded beyond measure, saying, "He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

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