

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

COLLECT

Almighty and merciful God, of whose only gift it cometh that thy faithful people do unto thee and laudable service: Grant, we beseech thee, that we may run without stumbling to obtain thy heavenly promises; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

FIRST READING: Deuteronomy 6:1-9

Moses said: Now this is the commandment--the statutes and the ordinances--that the LORD your God charged me to teach you to observe in the land that you are about to cross into and occupy, so that you and your children and your children's children, may fear the LORD your God all the days of your life, and keep all his decrees and his commandments that I am commanding you, so that your days may be long. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe them diligently, so that it may go well with you, and so that you may multiply greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, as the

LORD, the God of your ancestors, has promised you. Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Psalm 119:1-16

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| 1 Happy are they whose way is blameless, * who walk in the law of the LORD! | 6 Then I should not be put to shame, * when I regard all your commandments. |
| 2 Happy are they who observe his decrees * and seek him with all their hearts! | 7 I will thank you with an unfeigned heart, * when I have learned your righteous judgments. |
| 3 Who never do any wrong, * but always walk in his ways. | 8 I will keep your statutes; * do not utterly forsake me. |
| 4 You laid down your commandments, * that we should fully keep them. | 9 How shall a young man cleanse his way? * By keeping to your words. |
| 5 Oh, that my ways were made so direct * that I might keep your statutes! | 10 With my whole heart I seek you; * let me not stray from your commandments. |

11 I treasure your promise in my heart, * that I may not sin against you.

12 Blessed are you, O LORD; * instruct me in your statutes.

13 With my lips will I recite * all the judgments of your mouth.

14 I have taken greater delight in the way of your decrees * than in all manner of riches.

15 I will meditate on your commandments * and give attention to your ways.

16 My delight is in your statutes; * I will not forget your word.

SECOND READING:

Hebrews 7:23-28

The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office; but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. Consequently he is able for all time to save those who approach God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, blameless, undefiled, separated from sinners,

and exalted above the heavens. Unlike the other high priests, he has no need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for those of the people; this he did once for all when he offered himself. For the law appoints as high priests those who are subject to weakness, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.

GOSPEL:

Mark 12:28-34

One of the scribes came near and heard the Saducees disputing with one another, and seeing that Jesus answered them well, he asked him, "Which commandment is the first of all?" Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Then the scribe said to him, "You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that 'he is one, and besides him there is no other'; and 'to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength,' and 'to love one's neighbor as oneself,'--this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." After that no one dared to ask him any question.

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