



COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION
SUNDAY 1 AUGUST 2021 – 9th Sunday after Trinity

COLLECT

Almighty God,
who sent your Holy Spirit
to be the life and light of your Church:
open our hearts to the riches of your grace,
that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in love and joy and peace;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen. .

Psalm 51: 1-13

- 1 Have mercy on me, O God, in your great goodness; ♦
according to the abundance of your compassion
blot out my offences.
- 2 Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness ♦
and cleanse me from my sin.
- 3 For I acknowledge my faults ♦
and my sin is ever before me.
- 4 Against you only have I sinned ♦
and done what is evil in your sight,
- 5 So that you are justified in your sentence ♦
and righteous in your judgement.
- 6 I have been wicked even from my birth, ♦
a sinner when my mother conceived me.
- 7 Behold, you desire truth deep within me ♦
and shall make me understand wisdom
in the depths of my heart.
- 8 Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean; ♦
wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.
- 9 Make me hear of joy and gladness, ♦
that the bones you have broken may rejoice.
- 10 Turn your face from my sins ♦
and blot out all my misdeeds.
- 11 Make me a clean heart, O God, ♦
and renew a right spirit within me.
- 12 Cast me not away from your presence ♦
and take not your holy spirit from me.
- 13 Give me again the joy of your salvation ♦
and sustain me with your gracious spirit;

Ephesians 4: 1-16

I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ²with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

⁷ But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift. ⁸Therefore it is said, 'When he ascended on high he made captivity itself a captive; he gave gifts to his people.'
⁹(When it says, 'He ascended', what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? ¹⁰He who descended is the same one who ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things.) ¹¹The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, ¹²to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.

¹⁴We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. ¹⁵But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and knitted together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.

John 6: 24-35

So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus.

²⁵ When they found him on the other side of the lake, they said to him, 'Rabbi, when did you come here?' ²⁶Jesus answered them, 'Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. ²⁷Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal.'
²⁸Then they said to him, 'What must we do to perform the works of God?' ²⁹Jesus answered them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.'
³⁰So they said to him, 'What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing?' ³¹Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, "He gave them bread from heaven to eat."'
³²Then Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.'
³⁴They said to him, 'Sir, give us this bread always.'

A Reflection from Peter

One of the perils of living alone is that you can quite easily end up eating the same thing for several days in a row: you don't want to waste anything, so the simplest thing is to have it again! This may lead us to sympathise with the Israelites! You remember their long march out of Egypt and the way God provided manna for them to eat so they didn't starve on the way. At first it was fantastic, but it quickly became boring – "enough of this worthless food" they said – but it was that or nothing. When we hear Jesus speaking in our Gospel reading

something new is happening. First Jesus chides the crowd: 'you're just following me because I made those few loaves of bread turn into a picnic for thousands: it's just entertainment you want!' So the crowd try to ask the right question – though they don't do very well. They remember that the Israelites were given bread from heaven – the manna that sustained them in the wilderness. But Jesus makes clear that, in turn, was just a symbol of what God does for each of us: God gives life to the world – physical life, spiritual life, imaginative life, creative life – every kind of life is God's gift. Now the people say, "Sir, give us this bread always!" And Jesus says quite simply, "I am the bread of life" This is not a lifetime condemned to the same boring food. This is relationship with someone of inexhaustible generosity, understanding, compassion and love. No wonder he says, "Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty!"