

COLLECT

Lord, you have taught us that all our doings without love are nothing worth: send your Holy Spirit and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of love, the true bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whoever lives is counted dead before you. Grant this for your only Son Jesus Christ's sake, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING

Either **Genesis 3:8-15**

A reading from the book of Genesis.

The man and the woman heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel."

Or **1 Samuel 8:4-11 [12-15]**

R *With the Lord there is mercy and plenteous redemption.*

Out of the depths have I called to you, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice;

let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication.

If you, Lord, were to note what is done amiss,

O Lord, who could stand?

For there is forgiveness with you; therefore you shall be feared. **R**

I wait for the Lord; my soul waits for him;

in his word is my hope.

My soul waits for the Lord, more than the night-watch for the morning,

more than the night-watch for the morning. **R**

O Israel, wait for the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy;

With him there is plenteous

redemption,

and he shall redeem Israel from all their sins. **R**

SECOND READING

2 Corinthians 4:13 – 5:1

A reading from the second letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

Just as we have the same spirit of faith that is in accordance with scripture – "I believed, and so I spoke" – we also believe, and so we speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will bring us with you into his presence. Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God. So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal. For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

GOSPEL Mark 3:20-end

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

The crowd came together again, so that Jesus and his companions could

not even eat. When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, "He has gone out of his mind." And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons." And he called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come. But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered. Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin" – for they had said, "He has an unclean spirit." Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you." And he replied, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."

POST COMMUNION

Loving Father, we thank you for feeding us at the supper of your Son: sustain us with your Spirit, that we may serve you here on earth until our joy is complete in heaven, and we share in the eternal banquet with Jesus Christ our Lord.