

Fourth Sunday of Epiphany

The Sunday Collect:

O God, you know that we are set in the midst of many grave dangers, and because of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright: Grant that your strength and protection may support us in all dangers and carry us through every temptation; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

First Lesson: Deuteronomy 18:15-22

“The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers — it is to him you shall listen — just as you desired of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.’

And the Lord said to me, ‘They are right in what they have spoken. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers.

And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.

But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.’

And if you say in your heart, ‘How may we know the word that the Lord has not spoken?’ — when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 111 *Confitebor tibi*

- 1 Praise the Lord!*
**I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart, in the company of the upright,
in the congregation.**
- 2 Great are the works of the Lord,*
studied by all who delight in them.
- 3 Full of splendor and majesty is his work,*
and his righteousness endures forever.
- 4 He has caused his wondrous works to be remembered;*
the Lord is gracious and merciful.
- 5 He provides food for those who fear him;*
he remembers his covenant forever.
- 6 He has shown his people the power of his works,*
in giving them the inheritance of the nations.
- 7 The works of his hands are faithful and just;*
all his precepts are trustworthy;
- 8 they are established forever and ever,*
to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness.
- 9 He sent redemption to his people;*
he has commanded his covenant forever. Holy and awesome is his name!
- 10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;*
all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever!

We sing together:

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. World without end. Amen. Amen.

Second Lesson: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Now concerning food offered to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” This “knowledge” puffs up, but love builds up. If anyone imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know. But if anyone loves God, he is known by God.

Therefore, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “an idol has no real existence,” and that “there is no God but one.” For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords” — yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

However, not all possess this knowledge. But some, through former association with idols, eat food as really offered to an idol, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled.

Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.

For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols?

And so by your knowledge this weak person is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. Thus, sinning against your brothers and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Deacon: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

People: Glory to You, Lord Christ.

The Gospel: Mark 1:21-28

And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue and was teaching.

And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes.

And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are — the Holy One of God.”

But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!” And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him.

And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, “What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.” And at once his fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee.

Deacon: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ