

BIBLE READINGS SUNDAY 26th JUNE

Isaiah 65:1-3, 8-9

I, the Lord, was ready
to answer even those
 who were not asking
and to be found by those
 who were not searching.
To a nation that refused
to worship me,
 I said, "Here I am!"

² All day long I have reached out
to stubborn and sinful people
 going their own way.

³ They keep making me angry
 by sneering at me,
while offering sacrifices
 to idols in gardens
and burning incense
 to them on bricks.

⁸ Here is what the Lord says:
 A cluster of grapes
 that produces wine
 is worth keeping!

So, because of my servants,
 I won't destroy everyone.

⁹ I have chosen the people
 of Israel and Judah,
and I will bless them
 with many descendants.
They will settle here
in this land of mountains,
 and it will be theirs.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Galatians 3:23-29

²³ The Law controlled us and kept us under its power until the time came when we would have faith. ²⁴ In fact, the Law was to be our teacher until Christ came. Then we could have faith and be acceptable to God. ²⁵ But once a person has learned to have faith, there is no more need to have the Law as a teacher.

²⁶ All of you are God's children because of your faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁷ And when you were baptized, it was as though you had put on Christ in the same way you put on new clothes. ²⁸ Faith in Christ Jesus is what makes each of you equal with each other, whether you are a Jew or a Greek, a slave or a free person, a man or a woman. ²⁹ So if you belong to Christ, you are now part of Abraham's family, and you will be given what God has promised.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Luke 8:26-39

²⁶ Jesus and his disciples sailed across Lake Galilee and came to shore near the town of Gerasa. ²⁷ As Jesus was getting out of the boat, he was met by a man from this town. The man had demons in him. He had gone naked for a long time and no longer lived in a house, but in the graveyard.

²⁸ The man saw Jesus and screamed. He knelt down in front of him and shouted, "Jesus, Son of God Most High, what do you want with me? I beg you not to torture me!" ²⁹ He said this because Jesus had already told the evil spirit to go out of him.

The man had often been attacked by the demon. And even though he had been bound with chains and leg irons and kept under guard, he smashed whatever bound him. Then the demon would force him out into lonely places.

³⁰ Jesus asked the man, "What is your name?"

He answered, "My name is Lots." He said this because there were "lots" of demons in him. ³¹ They begged Jesus not to send them to the deep pit, where they would be punished.

³² A large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside. So the demons begged Jesus to let them go into the pigs, and Jesus let them go. ³³ Then the demons left the man and went into the pigs. The whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and drowned.

³⁴ When the men taking care of the pigs saw this, they ran to spread the news in the town and on the farms. ³⁵ The people went out to see what had happened, and when they came to Jesus, they also found the man. The demons had gone out of him, and he was sitting there at the feet of Jesus. He had clothes on and was in his right mind. But the people were terrified.

³⁶ Then all who had seen the man healed told about it. ³⁷ Everyone from around Gerasa begged Jesus to leave, because they were so frightened. When Jesus got into the boat to start back, ³⁸ the man who had been healed begged to go with him. But Jesus sent him off and said, ³⁹ "Go back home and tell everyone how much God has done for you." The man then went all over town, telling everything that Jesus had done for him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.