

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF SIRACH

The Lord is the judge,
and with him is no partiality.
He will not show partiality in the case of a poor man;
and he will listen to the prayer of one who is wronged.
He will not ignore the supplication of the orphan
or the widow when she pours out her story.
He whose service is pleasing to the Lord will be accepted,
and his prayer will reach to the clouds.
The prayer of the humble pierces the clouds,
and he will not be consoled until it reaches the Lord;
he will not desist until the Most High visits him
and does justice for the righteous and executes judgement.
And the Lord will not delay.

THE WORD OF THE LORD

THE RESPONSE TO THE PSALM IS:

The lowly one called, and the LORD heard him.

I will bless the LORD at all times,
praise of him is always in my mouth.

In the LORD my soul shall make its boast;
the humble shall hear and be glad.

The lowly one called, and the LORD heard him.

The LORD turns his face against the wicked
to cut off their remembrance from the earth.
When the just one cries out, the LORD hears,
and rescues him in all his distress.

The lowly one called, and the LORD heard him.

The LORD is close to the broken-hearted;
those whose spirit is crushed he will save.
The LORD ransoms the souls of his servants.
All who trust in him shall not be condemned.

The lowly one called, and the LORD heard him.

A READING FROM THE SECOND LETTER TO TIMOTHY

Beloved: I am already being poured out as a drink offering,
and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the
good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness,
which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that
day, and not only to me, but also to all who have loved his
appearing.

At my first defence no one came to stand by me, but all
deserted me. May it not be charged against them!

But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that
through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the
Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's
mouth. The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed
and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom.

To him be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

THE WORD OF THE LORD

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia.

God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself,
and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

Alleluia.

A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING
TO LUKE

Jesus told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt:

‘Two men went up into the Temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, said this prayer to himself “God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.” But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, “God, be merciful to me, a sinner!” I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.’

The Gospel of the Lord.

THE REFLECTION

I gave her the bowl to dry it was a Deruta Pottery one, reminding me of Assisi where it came from. She turned to talk to someone laughed and the bowl fell out of her hands and smashed. I looked annoyed so she said 'I am sorry 'and picked the pieces up and put them in the bin break breaking any hope of repair. It was gone. I still felt annoyed. She continued talking about something else.

Having done something wrong can mean lasting consequence for them and for you but a sense of self-righteousness won't mend a broken plate. the contempt for others and the view of Jesus that he said this prayer to himself makes the pharisee, A class widely respected in Jesus' time, the bad guy of the story. Self righteousness has little value before God.

The tax collector, generally regarded as a collaborator with the Roman occupying power has come to be honest before God and wanting a genuine change of heart, like perhaps Zaccheus giving part of his fortune away.

Our lives can easily be so self-focussed the God revolves around us, useful to call on, difficult to understand. To change this pattern is hard. A change of heart starts with the first step on the first day.. Asking for God's help means being aware of him and our need in personal prayer. The penitential prayer at the beginning we used today is short & easy

'Lord Jesus Christ, son of the living God have mercy on me, a sinner.