



Celebrate

Sunday, August 3, 2025
8th Sunday after Pentecost

Today's texts offer instruction and encouragement for all who are occasionally overwhelmed by the "unhappy business" of life. Jesus urges us to take care and be on guard against all kinds of greed. We who have died with Christ in holy baptism have also been raised with him and are encouraged to elevate our thinking, seeking the "things that are above." To that end we seek the sustenance of the Lord's supper and the encouragement of God's word.

Prayer of the Day

Benevolent God, you are the source, the guide, and the goal of our lives. Teach us to love what is worth loving, to reject what is offensive to you, and to treasure what is precious in your sight, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading

Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23

The teacher of wisdom who wrote Ecclesiastes sees that working for mere accumulation of wealth turns life into an empty game, a "vanity of vanities." Nevertheless, he asserts in the next verse, it is good to find enjoyment in one's work because such enjoyment is a gift from God.

Vanity of vanities, says the Teacher,
vanity of vanities! All is vanity.

¹²I, the Teacher, when king over Israel in Jerusalem, ¹³applied my mind to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven; it is an unhappy business that God has given to human beings to be busy with. ¹⁴I saw all the deeds that are done under the sun; and see, all is vanity and a chasing after wind.

^{2:18}I hated all my toil in which I had toiled under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to those who come after me ¹⁹—and who knows whether they will be wise or fool-

ish? Yet they will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. ²⁰So I turned and gave my heart up to despair concerning all the toil of my labors under the sun, ²¹because sometimes one who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave all to be enjoyed by another who did not toil for it. This also is vanity and a great evil. ²²What do mortals get from all the toil and strain with which they toil under the sun? ²³For all their days are full of pain, and their work is a vexation; even at night their minds do not rest. This also is vanity.



Hear this, ¹ all you peoples;

give ear, all you who dwell ¹ in the world,

²you of high de- ¹gree and low,
rich and ¹poor together.

³My mouth shall ¹speak of wisdom,
and my heart shall meditate on ¹understanding.

⁴I will incline my ear ¹to a proverb
and set forth my riddle up- ¹on the harp. **R**

⁵Why should I be afraid in ¹evil days,
when the wickedness of those at my ¹heels surrounds me,

⁶the wickedness of those who trust in ¹their own prowess,
and boast of ¹their great riches?

⁷One can never re- ¹deem another,
or give to God the ransom for an- ¹other's life;

⁸for the ransom of a life ¹is so great
that there would never be e- ¹nough to pay it,

⁹in order to live forev- ¹er and ever
and never ¹see the grave.

¹⁰For we see that the wise die also;
like the dull and stu- ¹pid they perish
and leave their wealth to those who come ¹after them.

¹¹Their graves shall be their homes forever,
their dwelling places from generation to ¹generation,
though they had named lands af- ¹ter themselves.

¹²Even though honored, they cannot ¹live forever;
they are like the ¹beasts that perish. **R**

Life in Christ includes a radical reorientation of our values. Just as the newly baptized shed their old clothes and put on new garments, so Christians are called to let go of greed and take hold of a life shaped by God's love in Christ.

So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, ³for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

⁵Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry). ⁶On account of these the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient. ⁷These

are the ways you also once followed, when you were living that life. ⁸But now you must get rid of all such things—anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive language from your mouth. ⁹Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices ¹⁰and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator. ¹¹In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all!

Gospel

Luke 12:13-21

In God's reign, the "rich will be sent away empty." Jesus uses a parable to warn against identifying the worth of one's life with the value of one's possessions rather than one's relationship with God.

Someone in the crowd said to [Jesus], "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." ¹⁴But he said to him, "Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?" ¹⁵And he said to them, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." ¹⁶Then he told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. ¹⁷And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my

crops?' ¹⁸Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' ²⁰But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' ²¹So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."

Prayers of Intercession

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

In solidarity with all creation, we join our voice to the voice of the whole church and pray for the needs of the world.

A brief silence.

Renew in your church a perspective of life beyond worldly pursuits. Build an enthusiasm to embrace life in Christ, so that Christ, the life of the world, is revealed to everyone. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Revitalize and protect the treasures of wild places. Teach all people to value the earth, winds, waters, trees, and animals, the gifts that make life possible on this planet. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Speak wisdom to any in positions of power, that they cease practices of divisiveness, insult, and oppression. Clothe all people in your image, and establish equity and peace. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Reveal your loving presence in the lives of people suffering hunger and need, illness and grief, pain and fear (*especially*). Give strength to those who give care, and equip them with compassion as they make your love known. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Store up in this congregation a full measure of gratitude and generosity. Guide the work of treasurers and all who attend to financial matters. Support those whose work in our community is difficult and demanding; make us mindful of the toil that goes unnoticed. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Receive our thanks for the lives of your saints who now rest from their labors. Give us wisdom through their witness and encourage us in love as we continue our lives in the world. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Trusting in your lovingkindness, we place our prayer and hope in you, in the name of Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Preparing for Next Week

Monday Psalm 127. **Tuesday** Colossians 4:2-6. **Wednesday** Ecclesiastes 12:1-8, 13-14. **Thursday** Psalm 33:12-22. **Friday** (commemoration of Dominic, founder of the Order of Preachers [Dominicans], 1221) Ecclesiastes 6:1-6. **Saturday** Matthew 6:19-24. **9th Sunday after Pentecost** (commemoration of Lawrence, deacon, martyr, 258) Genesis 15:1-6; Psalm 33:12-22; Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16; Luke 12:32-40.

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