

Sunday closest to July 20

Proper 11
Year B
RCL

The Collect

Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom, you know our necessities before we ask and our ignorance in asking: Have compassion on our weakness, and mercifully give us those things which for our unworthiness we dare not, and for our blindness we cannot ask; through the worthiness of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*

Old Testament

Jeremiah 23:1-6

Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the LORD. Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock, and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the LORD. Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall not fear any longer, or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the LORD.

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

The Psalm

Psalm 23

- 1 The LORD is my shepherd; *
I shall not be in want.
- 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures *
and leads me beside still waters.
- 3 He revives my soul *
and guides me along right pathways for his Name's sake.

- 4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I shall fear no evil; *
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
- 5 You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; *
you have anointed my head with oil,
and my cup is running over.
- 6 Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, *
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

The Epistle**Ephesians 2:11-22**

Remember that at one time you Gentiles by birth, called “the uncircumcision” by those who are called “the circumcision” —a physical circumcision made in the flesh by human hands— remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

The Gospel**Mark 6:30-34, 53-56**

The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, “Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. As he went ashore, he saw a

great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat. When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him, and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

The Gospel of the Lord.

SERMON

This morning, we reflect on the narrative found in the Gospel of Mark.

These passages offer us a vivid picture of Jesus' ministry, highlighting

His deep compassion and His roles as both a shepherd and a healer.

Whenever I read the Gospels, I imagine Jesus as an efficient Messiah—full of purpose, but short on time—striding from synagogue to village, from hilltop to seaside, always working miracles, engaging in life-changing conversations and sharing parables. It's as though Jesus never sleeps.

And we see today His apostles just returning from their first missionary journeys. They had been sent out by Jesus to preach the good news and to heal the sick. Now, they are back, bursting with thrilling stories of their healings and their successful evangelism that they did on their own for the first time. They are excited to share their experiences Jesus. They are ready for their next divine mission because the crowds are waiting, and they are ready to go! But Jesus, ever attentive and loving, sees their weariness. He understands their need for rest and renewal.

So, He says to them, “*Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.*” Jesus wants to provide a time of rest and recuperation for all of them. Can you picture the relief on their faces? They have been giving so much of themselves, and now their compassionate teacher is inviting them to take a moment to breathe, to be still.

We too need to remember, and heed, Jesus's invitation to rest. One of the impacts of the Covid pandemic has been the blurring of the boundaries between personal space and work, rest and productivity. Our homes, once a sanctuary for our personal life and our families, became offices and classrooms and meeting rooms. We lived on Zoom.

When Jesus urges his disciples to leave the noise and crowds behind, he is also telling us to do the same. Sometimes we need deep silence. But the peace Jesus and his disciples seek is short-lived. The people see Jesus leaving and recognize him. The news spreads like wildfire, and the crowds rush ahead, eager to be where Jesus is going. By the time Jesus and His disciples arrive at their destination, a great multitude is already there waiting.

But instead of seeing the crowd as an interruption, Jesus looks at them and feels a deep compassion.

He sees them as sheep without a shepherd, lost and in need of guidance.

His heart aches for them. And so, despite His own need for rest, He begins to teach them many things and offers them the spiritual nourishment they desperately need.

Jesus' compassion for the crowd challenges us to examine our own lives. How do we respond to the needs of others around us?

Are we moved with compassion when we see others struggling or lost? Do we make time to guide, teach, and support those who need it, even when it's inconvenient? Jesus shows us that true compassion often requires selflessness and a willingness to be present for others.

As we continue our Gospel reading, Jesus and His disciples land at Gennesaret. As soon as they step ashore, they are recognized.

The crowd is pushing and jostling to get close to Jesus. They carry their sick to him on mats. They plead. They beg to touch the fringe of his robe and receive healing. Once again, his response is compassion.

Wherever Jesus goes, all who touch Him are healed. He restores health and wholeness to all those who come to Him. And this healing touch is available to everyone, and His compassion knows no bounds. In our own lives, do we approach Jesus with the same urgency and faith as the people of Gennesaret?

Do we truly believe in His power to heal us—physically, emotionally, and spiritually? And are we willing to bring others to Him, knowing that He can meet their deepest needs?

In these passages, we see Jesus is walking among us today, filled with compassion, searching for each one of us. Jesus knows what we need, even when we do not. He looks past our busyness, restlessness, fear and weariness and looks into our hearts and sees what we truly desire, what we truly need.

And he says to us, come away to a place all by yourselves and rest a little while with me.

E pule kākou, let us pray.

Lord Jesus, we thank You for Your compassion and Your healing power. Help us to see the needs around us and respond with love and kindness. Strengthen our faith to seek Your touch in every area of our lives and to bring others to You. Amen.

SAID PRAYERS:

We say birthday prayers for Faith, turning 81 on Friday!

O God, our times are in your hand: Look with favor, we pray, on your servant *Faith*. as *she* begins another year. Grant that *she* may grow in wisdom and grace and strengthen *her* trust in your goodness all the days of *her* life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*.

We pray for the bereaved family of Lowell Nagaue (brother-in-law of Les).

We pray for safe travels for deacon Alberta Buller, making her way to O'ahu for next Sunday's service.

SAID ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Next Sunday Deacon Alberta will be joining us. She comes from Holy Apostles in Hilo. As one of just 3 deacons in the state she will demonstrate and talk about what a deacon does in the service and will also be preaching that morning. Please welcome her and her husband.