

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, 10 SEPTEMBER 2023

FIRST READING: Exodus 12:1-14 The Lord institutes the Passover

12 The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, ² 'This month is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year. ³ Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb^[a] for his family, one for each household. ⁴ If any household is too small for a whole lamb, they must share one with their nearest neighbour, having taken into account the number of people there are. You are to determine the amount of lamb needed in accordance with what each person will eat. ⁵ The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect, and you may take them from the sheep or the goats. ⁶ Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the members of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight. ⁷ Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the door-frames of the houses where they eat the lambs. ⁸ That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast. ⁹ Do not eat the meat raw or boiled in water, but roast it over a fire – with the head, legs and internal organs. ¹⁰ Do not leave any of it till morning; if some is left till morning, you must burn it. ¹¹ This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste; it is the LORD's Passover. ¹² 'On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn of both people and animals, and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the LORD. ¹³ The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are, and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt. ¹⁴ 'This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD – a lasting ordinance.

PSALM 149

¹ Praise the LORD.^[a] Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise in the assembly of his faithful people. ² Let Israel rejoice in their Maker; let the people of Zion be glad in their King. ³ Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with tambourine and harp. ⁴ For the LORD takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with victory. ⁵ Let his faithful people rejoice in this honour and sing for joy on their beds. ⁶ May the praise of God be in

their mouths and a double-edged sword in their hands, ⁷ to inflict vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples, ⁸ to bind their kings with fetters, their nobles with shackles of iron, ⁹ to carry out the sentence written against them – this is the glory of all his faithful people. Praise the LORD.

SECOND READING: Romans 13:8-14 The debt of love

⁸ Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. ⁹ The commandments, ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not covet,’^[a] and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’^[b] ¹⁰ Love does no harm to a neighbour. Therefore love is the fulfilment of the law. ¹¹ And do this, understanding the present time: the hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. ¹² The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armour of light. ¹³ Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. ¹⁴ Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:15-20 Steps towards reconciliation

¹⁵ ‘If your brother or sister^[a] sins, ^[b] go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. ¹⁶ But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that “every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.”^[c] ¹⁷ If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector. ¹⁸ ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be^[d] bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be^[e] loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ ‘Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.’