

Fourth Sunday After Epiphany, 28 January 2024

First Reading: Deuteronomy 18:15-20 The Lord promises a prophet like Moses

¹⁵ The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him. ¹⁶ For this is what you asked of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, 'Let us not hear the voice of the LORD our God nor see this great fire any more, or we will die.' ¹⁷ The LORD said to me: 'What they say is good. ¹⁸ I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their fellow Israelites, and I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him. ¹⁹ I myself will call to account anyone who does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name. ²⁰ But a prophet who presumes to speak in my name anything I have not commanded, or a prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, is to be put to death.'

PSALM 111

¹ Praise the LORD. I will extol the LORD with all my heart in the council of the upright and in the assembly. ² Great are the works of the LORD; they are pondered by all who delight in them. ³ Glorious and majestic are his deeds, and his righteousness endures for ever. ⁴ He has caused his wonders to be remembered; the LORD is gracious and compassionate. ⁵ He provides food for those who fear him; he remembers his covenant for ever. ⁶ He has shown his people the power of his works, giving them the lands of other nations. ⁷ The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy. ⁸ They are established for ever and ever, enacted in faithfulness and uprightness. ⁹ He provided redemption for his people; he ordained his covenant for ever – holy and awesome is his name. ¹⁰ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Freedom and the conscience of your fellow believer

8 Now about food sacrificed to idols: we know that 'We all possess knowledge.' But knowledge puffs up while love builds up. ² Those who think

they know something do not yet know as they ought to know. ³ But whoever loves God is known by God. ⁴ So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: we know that ‘An idol is nothing at all in the world’ and that ‘There is no God but one.’ ⁵ For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many ‘gods’ and many ‘lords’), ⁶ yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live. ⁷ But not everyone possesses this knowledge. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat sacrificial food they think of it as having been sacrificed to a god, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. ⁸ But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do. ⁹ Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling-block to the weak. ¹⁰ For if someone with a weak conscience sees you, with all your knowledge, eating in an idol’s temple, won’t that person be emboldened to eat what is sacrificed to idols? ¹¹ So this weak brother or sister, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. ¹² When you sin against them in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. ¹³ Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause them to fall.

GOSPEL: Mark 1:21-28 Jesus teaches with authority

²¹ They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. ²² The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. ²³ Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an impure spirit cried out, ²⁴ ‘What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are – the Holy One of God!’ ²⁵ ‘Be quiet!’ said Jesus sternly. ‘Come out of him!’ ²⁶ The impure spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek. ²⁷ The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, ‘What is this? A new teaching – and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him.’ ²⁸ News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.