



# A Celebration for the Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

## **Sentence**

Whoever does not carry the cross and follow Jesus cannot be his disciple. *(Luke 14:27)*

## **Opening Prayer or Collect**

God of the ages,  
you call the Church to keep watch in the world  
and to discern the signs of the times:

grant us the wisdom that your Spirit bestows,  
so that with courage we may proclaim your prophetic word.  
and complete the work you have set before us;  
through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## **Readings for the Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)**

### ***Old Testament: Jeremiah 18:1-11***

*A Reading from the prophet Jeremiah, Chapter 18 beginning at verse 1*

The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: 'Come, go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words.' So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel. The vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as seemed good to him.

Then the word of the Lord came to me: Can I not do with you, O house of Israel, just as this potter has done? says the Lord. Just like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. At one moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, but if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will change my mind about the disaster that I intended to bring on it. And at another moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will build and plant it, but if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will change my mind about the good that I had intended to do to it. Now, therefore, say to the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: Thus says the Lord: Look, I am a potter shaping evil against you and devising a plan against you. Turn now, all of you from your evil way, and amend your ways and your doings.

Hear the Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

### ***Psalms 139:1-5, 12-18 APBA p 370***

1 O Lord, you have searched me out and known me:  
you know when I sit or when I stand,  
you comprehend my thoughts long before.

- 2 You discern my path and the places where I rest:  
you are acquainted with all my ways.
- 3 For there is not a word on my tongue:  
but you, Lord, know it altogether.
- 4 You have encompassed me behind and before:  
and have laid your hand upon me.
- 5 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me:  
so high that I cannot endure it.
- 12 For you have created my inward parts:  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
- 13 I will praise you, for you are to be feared:  
fearful are your acts, and wonderful your works.
- 14 You knew my soul, and my bones were not hidden from you:  
when I was formed in secret,  
and woven in the depths of the earth.
- 15 Your eyes saw my limbs when they were yet imperfect:  
and in your book were all my members written;
- 16 Day by day they were fashioned:  
and not one was late in growing.
- 17 How deep are your thoughts to me, O God:  
and how great is the sum of them!
- 18 Were I to count them,  
they are more in number than the sand:  
were I to come to the end, I would still be with you.

### ***New Testament: Philemon 1-25***

*A Reading from the Letter to Philemon, beginning at verse 1*

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,

To Philemon our dear friend and co-worker, to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow-soldier, and to the church in your house:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

When I remember you in my prayers, I always thank my God because I hear of your love for all the saints and your faith towards the Lord Jesus. I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective when you perceive all the good that we may do for Christ. I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother.

For this reason, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do your duty, yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love—and I, Paul, do this as an old man, and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful both to you and to me. I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. I wanted to keep him with me, so that he might be of service to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel; but I preferred to do nothing without your consent, in order

that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back for ever, no longer as a slave but as more than a slave, a beloved brother—especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. If he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self. Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.

One thing more—prepare a guest room for me, for I am hoping through your prayers to be restored to you.

Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends greetings to you, and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow-workers.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Hear the Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

### ***Gospel: Luke 14:25-35***

*A Reading from the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke,  
Chapter 14, beginning at verse 25*

**Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ**

Now large crowds were travelling with him; and he turned and said to them, ‘Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, saying, “This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.” Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.

‘Salt is good; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure heap; they throw it away. Let anyone with ears to hear listen!’

For the Gospel of the Lord

**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**