

Bible Readings & Prayers – 23rd July, 2023

The Collect for the 7th Sunday after Trinity

Generous God,
you give us gifts and make them grow:
though our faith is small as mustard seed,
make it grow to your glory
and the flourishing of your kingdom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Micah 2:1-10

Alas for those who devise wickedness
and evil deeds on their beds!
When the morning dawns, they perform it,
because it is in their power.
They covet fields, and seize them;
houses, and take them away;
they oppress householder and house,
people and their inheritance.
Therefore, thus says the Lord:
Now, I am devising against this family an evil
from which you cannot remove your necks;
and you shall not walk haughtily,
for it will be an evil time.
On that day they shall take up a taunt-song against you,
and wail with bitter lamentation,
and say, 'We are utterly ruined;
the Lord alters the inheritance of my people;
how he removes it from me!
Among our captors he parcels out our fields.'
Therefore you will have no one to cast the line by lot
in the assembly of the Lord.
'Do not preach'—thus they preach—
'one should not preach of such things;
disgrace will not overtake us.'
Should this be said, O house of Jacob?
Is the Lord's patience exhausted?
Are these his doings?
Do not my words do good
to one who walks uprightly?
But you rise up against my people as an enemy;
you strip the robe from the peaceful,
from those who pass by trustingly
with no thought of war.
The women of my people you drive out
from their pleasant houses;
from their young children you take away
my glory for ever.
Arise and go;
for this is no place to rest,
because of uncleanness that destroys
with a grievous destruction.

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Jesus put before the crowds another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, "Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?" He answered, "An enemy has done this." The slaves said to him, "Then do you want us to go and gather them?" But he replied, "No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, 'Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.' He answered, 'The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!