

SERIES A TEXTS

Eighth Sunday after Epiphany/Lectionary 8

First Reading: Isaiah 49:8-16a

⁸ Thus says the LORD: In a time of favor I have answered you, on a day of salvation I have helped you; I have kept you and given you as a covenant to the people, to establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages; ⁹ saying to the prisoners, "Come out," to those who are in darkness, "Show yourselves." They shall feed along the ways, on all the bare heights shall be their pasture; ¹⁰ they shall not hunger or thirst, neither scorching wind nor sun shall strike them down, for he who has pity on them will lead them, and by springs of water will guide them. ¹¹ And I will turn all my mountains into a road, and my highways shall be raised up. ¹² Lo, these shall come from far away, and lo, these from the north and from the west, and these from the land of Syene. ¹³ Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth; break forth, O mountains, into singing! For the LORD has comforted his people, and will have compassion on his suffering ones. ¹⁴ But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me, my Lord has forgotten me." ¹⁵ Can a woman forget her nursing child, or show no compassion for the child of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. ¹⁶ See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands.

Psalm: Psalm 131

O LORD, my heart is not lifted up, my eyes are not raised too high; I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me. ² But I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother; my soul is like the weaned child that is with me. ³ O Israel, hope in the LORD from this time on and forevermore.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 4:1-5

¹ Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries. ² Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy. ³ But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by **you** or by any human court. I do not even judge myself. ⁴ I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. ⁵ Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive commendation from God.

Gospel: Matthew 6:24-34

"No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. **You** cannot serve God and wealth. ²⁵ "Therefore I tell **you**, do not worry about **your** life, what **you** will eat or what **you** will drink, or about **your** body, what **you** will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are **you** not of more value than they? ²⁷ And can any of **you** by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? ²⁸ And why do **you** worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, ²⁹ yet I tell **you**, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. ³⁰ But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which

SERIES A TEXTS

is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you-- you of little faith? ³¹ Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' ³² For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³ But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ "So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today. (Mat 6:24 NRS)