



COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION
14 August, 9th Sunday after Trinity

COLLECT

Almighty Lord and everlasting God,
we beseech you to direct, sanctify and govern
both our hearts and bodies
in the ways of your laws
and the works of your commandments;
that through your most mighty protection, both here and ever,
we may be preserved in body and soul;
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Psalm 82

- 1 God has taken his stand in the council of heaven; ♦
in the midst of the gods he gives judgement:
- 2 'How long will you judge unjustly ♦
and show such favour to the wicked?
- 3 'You were to judge the weak and the orphan; ♦
defend the right of the humble and needy;
- 4 'Rescue the weak and the poor; ♦
deliver them from the hand of the wicked.
- 5 'They have no knowledge or wisdom; they walk on still in darkness: ♦
all the foundations of the earth are shaken.
- 6 'Therefore I say that though you are gods ♦
and all of you children of the Most High,
- 7 'Nevertheless, you shall die like mortals ♦
and fall like one of their princes.'
- 8 Arise, O God and judge the earth, ♦
for it is you that shall take all nations for your possession.

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews, Chapter 11, verse 29 to Chapter 12, verse 2.

29 By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land, but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned. ³⁰By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days. ³¹By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace.

32 And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— ³³who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. ³⁵Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection. ³⁶Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented— ³⁸of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.

39 Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰since God had provided something better so that they would not, without us, be made perfect.

12Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, ²looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, Alleluia.

May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ enlighten the eyes of our mind,
so that we can see what hope his call holds for us.

Alleluia.

**Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke, Chapter 12, vv 49 – 56
Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus said, 'I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! ⁵⁰I have a baptism with which to be baptized, and what stress I am under until it is completed! ⁵¹Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! ⁵²From now on, five in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three; ⁵³they will be divided: father against son

and son against father,
mother against daughter
and daughter against mother,
mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law
and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.'

⁵⁴ He also said to the crowds, 'When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, "It is going to rain"; and so it happens. ⁵⁵And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, "There will be scorching heat"; and it happens. ⁵⁶You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

A Reflection from Peter....

"Do you think," says Jesus, "that I have come to bring peace to the earth?" And our instinct is to say, 'Yes, yes! - and quickly...' But Jesus goes on, "No, I tell you, but rather division." This, of course, is not what we want to hear. And we tend to rapidly domesticate it, make it manageable, but saying something like: Well, what Jesus is saying is that, until the end of time, there will be always be a measure of conflict and division. It's simply part of life on earth – but we shall do our best to be loving and gentle with everyone and then at least we shan't make things too much worse... (And you think of the effort we put into making our congregations and church communities warm and welcoming - and rightly so.)

But what Jesus asks of us is something different, something very different from the way the world operates. He invites us to join him in a way of living that refuses all division into 'us' and 'them'. He invites us to accept the good in others as a gift for ourselves; and to see the weaknesses and failures of others mirrored in ourselves. We are no other, no better, no different. We are all children of the one God.