

Scripture Readings for Sunday June 17, 2018

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

First Reading

Ezekiel 17:22-24

Thus says the Lord God:
I myself will take a sprig
from the lofty top of a cedar;
I will set it out.
I will break off a tender one
from the topmost of its young twigs;
I myself will plant it
on a high and lofty mountain.
On the mountain height of Israel
I will plant it,
in order that it may produce boughs and bear fruit,
and become a noble cedar.
Under it every kind of bird will live;
in the shade of its branches will nest
winged creatures of every kind.
All the trees of the field shall know
that I am the Lord.
I bring low the high tree,
I make high the low tree;
I dry up the green tree
and make the dry tree flourish.
I the Lord have spoken;
I will accomplish it.

Psalm 92:1-4,11-14

Bonum est confiteri

- 1 It is a good thing to give thanks to the Lord, *
and to sing praises to your Name, O Most High;
- 2 To tell of your loving-kindness early in the morning *
and of your faithfulness in the night season;
- 3 On the psaltery, and on the lyre, *
and to the melody of the harp.
- 4 For you have made me glad by your acts, O Lord; *
and I shout for joy because of the works of your hands.
- 11 The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree, *
and shall spread abroad like a cedar of Lebanon.

12 Those who are planted in the house of the Lord *
shall flourish in the courts of our God;

13 They shall still bear fruit in old age; *
they shall be green and succulent;

14 That they may show how upright the Lord is, *
my Rock, in whom there is no fault.

Second Reading

2 Corinthians 5:6-10, 14-17

We are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord-- for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please Christ. For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.

For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. And Christ died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for Christ who died and was raised for them. From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know Christ no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

The Gospel

Mark 4:26-34

Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come."

He also said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."

With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.