



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16–22

TIME AFTER PENTECOST — LECTIONARY 29

FIRST READING: Isaiah 45:1-7

A reading from Isaiah.

¹Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus,
whose right hand I have grasped
to subdue nations before him
and to strip kings of their robes,
to open doors before him—
and the gates shall not be closed:
²I will go before you
and level the mountains;
I will break in pieces the doors of bronze
and cut through the bars of iron;
³I will give you the treasures of darkness
and riches hidden in secret places,
so that you may know that it is I, the LORD,
the God of Israel, who call you by your name.
⁴For the sake of my servant Jacob
and Israel my chosen,
I call you by your name;
I give you a title, though you do not know me.
⁵I am the LORD, and there is no other;
besides me there is no god.
I arm you, though you do not know me,
⁶so that they may know, from the rising of the sun
and from the west, that there is no one besides me;
I am the LORD, and there is no other.
⁷I form light and create darkness,
I make weal and create woe;
I the LORD do all these things.

Word of God, word of life. or The word of the Lord.

PSALMODY: Psalm 96:1-9 [10-13]

FIRST READING *Isaiah = eye-ZAY-uh* *Cyrus = SY-rus*

This is a fascinating text and somewhat complex. The prophet puts these words in the mouth of God; thus, the reader will want to assume God's voice for this reading. God announces that the benevolent despot, Cyrus, a non-Jew, will be God's anointed one and will serve God's purposes, though Cyrus does not know the God of Israel. This is a divine declaration of God's ability to get things done and of God's singular lordship over all.

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

A reading from First Thessalonians.

¹Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,
To the church of the Thessalonians
in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:
Grace to you and peace.

²We always give thanks to God for all of you
and mention you in our prayers,
constantly ³remembering before our God and Father
your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope
in our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you,
⁵because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only
but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction;
just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you
for your sake.

⁶And you became imitators of us and of the Lord,
for in spite of persecution
you received the word with joy from the Holy Spirit,
⁷so that you became an example to all the believers
in Macedonia and in Achaia.

⁸For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you
not only in Macedonia and Achaia
but in every place your faith in God has become known,
so that we have no need to speak about it.

⁹For they report about us what kind of welcome we had among you
and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God
¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—
Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

Word of God, word of life. or The word of the Lord.

SECOND READING *Thessalonians = thess-uh-LOAN-ee-unz Silvanus = sil-VAY-nus*
Macedonia = mass-uh-DOHN-ee-uh Achaia = uh-KAY-uh

This is the beginning of a letter. An understood "From" precedes the names of the authors: Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy. The sentence structure in this text strikes the contemporary ear as convoluted. In preparing, the reader will do well to be certain where each sentence will end. Only then will the message be clear to reader and hearer alike.

GOSPEL: Matthew 22:15-22

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

¹⁵The Pharisees went and plotted to entrap ˆJesusˆ in what he said.

¹⁶So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying,
“Teacher, we know that you are sincere,
and teach the way of God in accordance with truth,
and show deference to no one, for you do not regard people with partiality.

¹⁷Tell us, then, what you think.

Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

¹⁸But Jesus, aware of their malice, said,

“Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites?

¹⁹Show me the coin used for the tax.”

And they brought him a denarius.

²⁰Then he said to them, “Whose head is this and whose title?”

²¹They answered, “Caesar’s.”

Then he said to them,

“Give therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s
and to God the things that are God’s.”

²²When they heard this, they were amazed,
and they left him and went away.

The gospel of the Lord.

GOSPEL *Herodians = heh-ROH-dee-unz denarius = den-AR-ee-us*

The tone of verses 15-17 is utterly deceitful! Our Lord’s response is the picture of patience. Allow the assembly to enjoy the contrast.