

SEPTEMBER 17 THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty and eternal God, you know our problems and our weaknesses better than we ourselves. In your love and by your power help us in our confusion and, in spite of our weakness, make us firm in faith; through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

THE FIRST LESSON - Genesis 50:15-21

15 When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him." 16 So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this command before he died, 17 'Say to Joseph, Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.' And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. 18 His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." 19 But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? 20 As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. 21 So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

THE RESPONSIVE READING – Psalms 103:1-12

- 1 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!
- 2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits,
- 3 who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases,
- 4 who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,
- 5 who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.
- 6 The LORD works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed.
- 7 He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel.
- 8 The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
- 9 He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever.
- 10 He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.
- 11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;
- 12 as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

THE SECOND LESSON - Romans 14:1-12

1 As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. 2 One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. 3 Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. 4 Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand. 5 One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. 6 The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who

eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. **7** For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. **8** For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. **9** For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living. **10** Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; **11** for it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." **12** So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

THE HOLY GOSPEL - Matthew 18:21-35

21 Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?" **22** Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. **23** "Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. **24** As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. **25** Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. **26** "At this the servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' **27** The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go. **28** "But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded. **29** "His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.' **30** "But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. **31** When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened. **32** "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. **33** Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' **34** In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. **35** "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

HYMNS

My Faith Looks up to Thee	LBW 479
Praise and Thanksgiving	LBW 470
O God of Mercy, God of Light	LBW 425
Come Thou Font of Every Blessing	LBW 495