



**READING 1 – Jeremiah 23:1-6**

***A reading from the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah***

<sup>1</sup> “Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of my pasture!” declares the LORD. <sup>2</sup> Therefore this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says to the shepherds who tend my people: “Because you have scattered my flock and driven them away and have not bestowed care on them, I will bestow punishment on you for the evil you have done,” declares the LORD. <sup>3</sup> “I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and will bring them back to their pasture, where they will be fruitful and increase in number. <sup>4</sup> I will place shepherds over them who will tend them, and they will no longer be afraid or terrified, nor will any be missing,” declares the LORD.



<sup>5</sup> “The days are coming,” declares the LORD,  
“when I will raise up for David<sup>[a]</sup> a righteous Branch,  
a King who will reign wisely  
and do what is just and right in the land.  
<sup>6</sup> In his days Judah will be saved  
and Israel will live in safety.  
This is the name by which he will be called:  
The LORD Our Righteous Savior.

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**RESPONSORIAL PSALM**  
**Psalm 23:1-3, 3-4, 5, 6**

**/R/ The Lord is my shepherd; there  
is nothing I shall want.**

The Lord is my shepherd;  
I shall not want.  
In verdant pastures he gives me  
repose;  
beside restful waters he leads me;  
he refreshes my soul.

/R/

He guides me in right paths  
for his name’s sake.  
Even though I walk in the dark valley  
I fear no evil; for you are at my side  
with your rod and staff  
that give me courage.

/R/

You spread the table before me  
in the sight of my foes;  
you anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.

/R/



Only goodness and kindness follow me  
all the days of my life;  
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord  
for years to come.

/R/

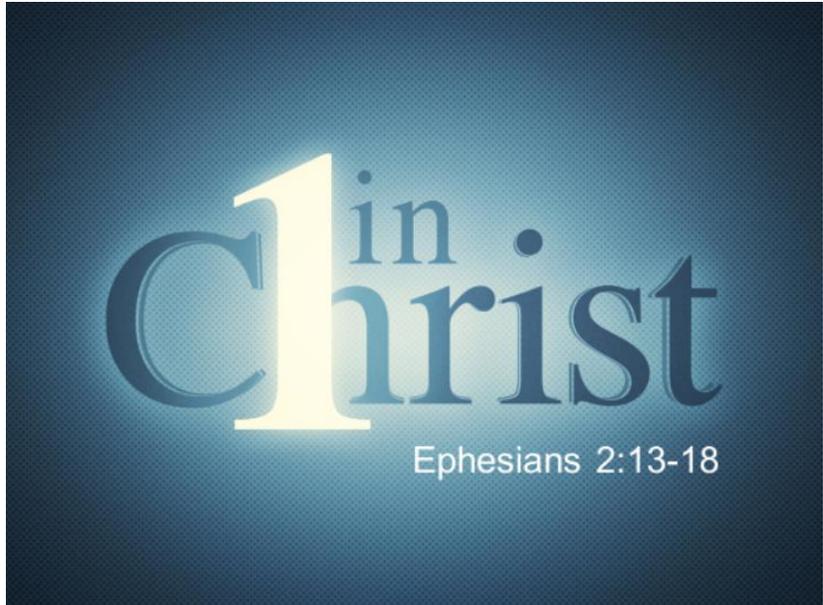
**READING 2 – Ephesians 2:13-18**

***A reading from the Letter of  
Saint Paul to the Ephesians***

Brothers and sisters:

<sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

<sup>14</sup> For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, <sup>15</sup> by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, <sup>16</sup> and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. <sup>17</sup> He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. <sup>18</sup> For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.



**ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA.**

*My sheep hear my voice, says the Lord;  
I know them, and they follow me.*

**ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA**

**GOSPEL – Mark 6:30-34**

***A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark***

<sup>30</sup> The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. <sup>31</sup> Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.”



<sup>32</sup> So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. <sup>33</sup> But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. <sup>34</sup> When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So, he began teaching them many things.

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**A PRAYER CONCERNING OUR DAILY CHOICE  
(1 Peter 2:6)**

*<sup>6</sup> He who believes in Him will not be disappointed.*

Dear God,  
Sometimes, it is very difficult for me to say, “*Not my will, but Yours be done today*”. It is often a grueling lesson to accept that what you want, and what you have for me, is far better than anything I could ever seek or find on my own. Help me understand, and more importantly, believe, that this is exactly what you are striving to teach me – complete and unhindered dependence on you, and confidence in your love, wisdom, and power. That is why I am facing what I am to today – once more, you are presenting me with a choice of faith. Will I trust you or will I seek my own way? Will I accept what you send me as an instrument of discipleship to train me? Will I say, no matter what happens, “*Lord, instruct me; I trust you even in this.*”? Teach me that there is nothing better I can do than abandon myself to your will, provision, and protection – which is the path to get me through this adversity so that I might enjoy an abundant, fulfilling, and joyous life with you.



Amen

**A PRAYER CONCERNING  
EVERYTHING FOR GOOD  
(Romans 8:28)**

*28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*

Dear God,  
There is a problem that persists in my life, and no matter what I do, I just cannot seem to make it go away on my own! Help me accept that I may not understand the reason for this difficulty at this moment – and that’s okay. Teach me that it is not necessary that I comprehend my

circumstances or why they affect me as they do – instead, what is important is that I honor you in them. Let me understand that the key to maintaining my hope as I experience adversity is found in this one fundamental truth – *God is absolutely sovereign!* And, because you are Lord over all creation, I can know with certainty that you will work through *everything* that touches my life for my benefit – nothing gets through to me that won’t somehow refine or edify me eventually. Therefore, give me the strength to understand that the wisest course whenever trials arise is to ask, “*Father, what would You have me learn from this?*” – and then let me listen to you, trust you, and obey you - enduring with confidence, knowing that I will eventually see how you have worked through every detail to bless me.

Amen



**A PRAYER CONCERNING CRITICISM  
(Matthew 7:1-3)**

*1 "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. 2 For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. 3 "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?"*



Dear God,

I do not like criticism – even when it is constructive. But, I know that sometimes I need it! Help me to welcome constructive criticism so that I can become more like the person you created me to be. It is so much easier to accept someone else’s assessment when it is offered gently and in a caring way, rather than a harsh or humiliating way. Please remind me to offer criticism to others in the same way as I would like to receive it. I do not want to judge – that is evaluating others with no intent to see them improve. When I offer constructive criticism, may my goal be to help that person become who you created them to be. Please help ensure that when I must criticize, may it never be a discouraging experience in that person’s life, but rather, a divine moment of positive change.

Amen

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**A PRAYER CONCERNING BEING FORGIVEN  
(Romans 3:23-24)**

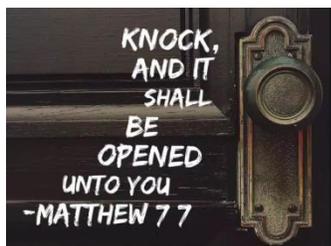
*<sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.*



Dear God,

There are times when I sit in fear after reading the sins listed in your Word. I try to lead a good life, but unfortunately, it seems like I have committed so many of these sins that I just cannot believe that you would ever accept me. Please help me understand that *every* person has *some* aspect of sin in their life. More importantly, give me the understanding that this is the reason why we need Jesus in the first place! We simply cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven without him! When we accept Jesus as our Savior, we are washed in his blood and the stain of sin is removed. Through Jesus’ death and resurrection, we have a restored, permanent, and personal relationship with you, God. Help me trust and believe that my sins do not surprise you, and I have no reason to fear as you have already forgiven me in Christ. Thank you for your mercy and the indescribable joy you have brought to my heart!

Amen



***“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.”***

*Matthew 7:7-12*