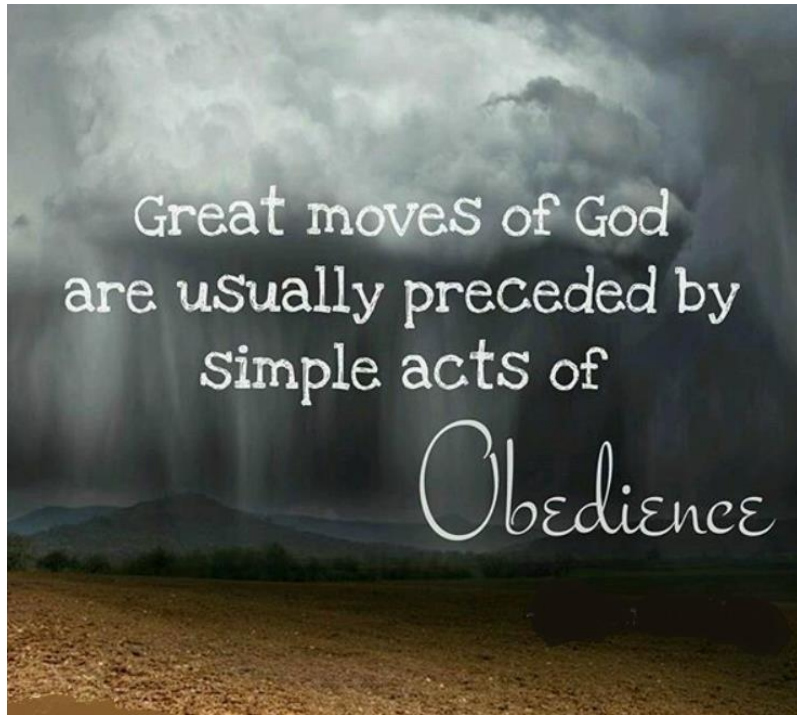


COLLECT

God of might, giver of every good gift, put into our hearts the love of your name, so that, by deepening our sense of reverence, you may nurture in us what is good and, by your watchful care, keep safe what you have nurtured. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

Amen





READING 1 – Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8

A reading from the Book of Deuteronomy

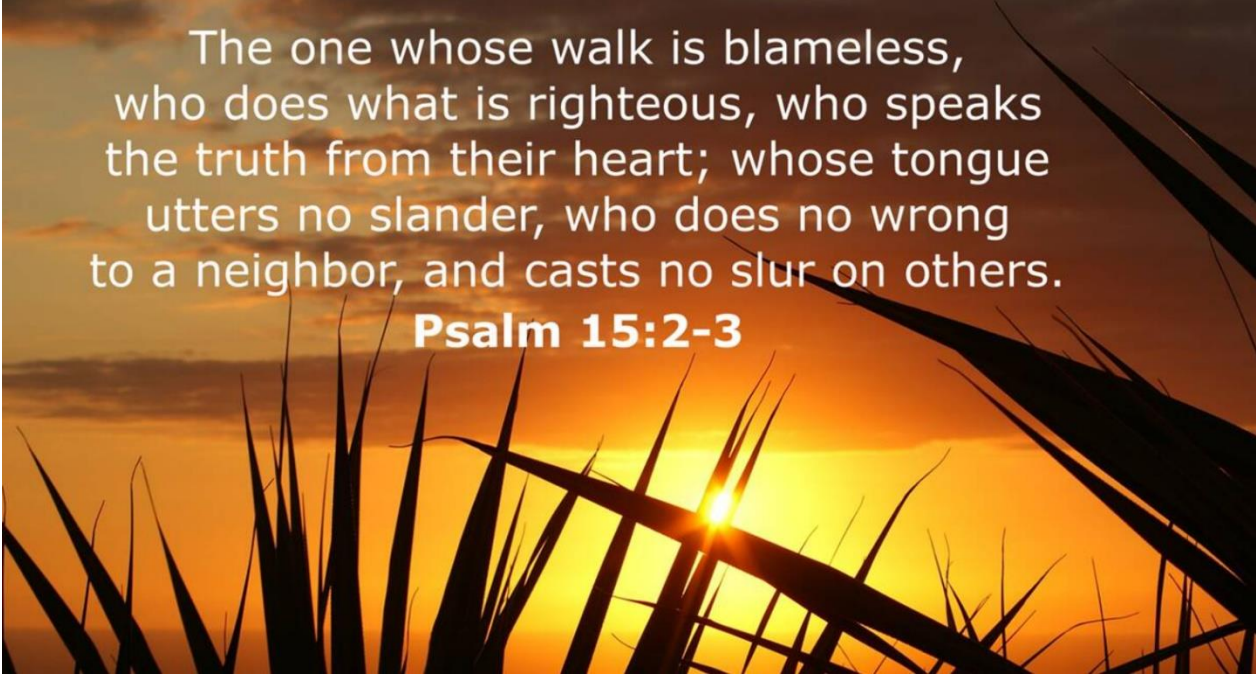
Moses said to the people:

¹ Now, Israel, hear the decrees and laws I am about to teach you. Follow them so that you may live and may go in and take possession of the land the LORD, the God of your ancestors, is giving you.

² Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the LORD your God that I give you.

⁶ Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people."

⁷ What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the LORD our God is near us whenever we pray to him? ⁸ And what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today?



The one whose walk is blameless,
who does what is righteous, who speaks
the truth from their heart; whose tongue
utters no slander, who does no wrong
to a neighbor, and casts no slur on others.

Psalm 15:2-3

RESPONSORIAL PSALM - Psalm 15:2-3, 3-4, 4-5

R. The one who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.

Whoever walks blamelessly and does justice;
who thinks the truth in his heart
and slanders not with his tongue.

/R/ The one who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.

Who harms not his fellow man,
nor takes up a reproach against his neighbor;
by whom the reprobate is despised,
while he honors those who fear the LORD.

/R/ The one who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.

Who lends not his money at usury
and accepts no bribe against the innocent.

Whoever does these things
shall never be disturbed.

/R/ The one who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.



READING 2 – James 1:17-18, 21-22, 27

A reading from the Letter of Saint James

Dearest brothers and sisters:

¹⁷ Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

¹⁸ He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first-fruits of all he created.

²¹ Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

²² Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

²⁷ Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA

The Father willed to give us birth by the word of truth, that we may be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA

(James 1:18)



GOSPEL – Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

¹ The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus ²and saw some of his disciples, eating food with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed. ³(The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders. ⁴When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers, and kettles.)

⁵So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, "Why don't your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with defiled hands?"

⁶ He replied, “Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written:

*“These people honor me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me.*

*⁷ They worship me in vain;
their teachings are merely human rules.’*

⁸ You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions.”

¹⁴ Again Jesus called the crowd to him and said, “Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. ¹⁵ Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them.”

²¹ For it is from within, out of a person’s heart, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, ²² adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance, and folly. ²³ All these evils come from inside and defile a person.”

A PRAYER CONCERNING PLANTING FOR YOUR FUTURE (2 Corinthians 9:6)

⁶ Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.

Dear God,

Today, I know that I will have many choices to make – but, as I make decisions, help me to remember that I will reap what I sow. In this life, we harvest what we have planted in the past, and the choices I make today will influence what I reap in the future. Help me to consider what would I like to accomplish in my life? Am I seeking to fulfill the purpose for which you created me? If so, then what type of seeds am I planting? Am I sowing behaviors that will deepen my relationship with you, such as prayer, Bible study, and fellowship with other believers? Am I being generous with the gifts and talents you have given me? Am I sowing love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control in my relationships with others? Help me, God, to be conscious of the choices I make every day, and remind me that each one is a seed that I am planting for my future. Teach me to invest bountifully in honoring and obeying you, and give me the wisdom to realize that if I sow prudently, I will surely be glad when it comes time to harvest the seeds I have planted in the past.

Amen

