**Ante Communion Service: August 15, 2021, Proper 15B**

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*Celebrant* Blessed be the Holy Trinity, one God, the fountain of living water*,* the rock who gave birth, our light and our salvation. **Amen.**

*Celebrant* Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*A moment of silence for self-reflection*

*Celebrant* Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*People* **Gracious God, have mercy on us.**

**We confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed,**

**by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved**

**our neighbors as ourselves; we have not loved all Creation with the love of the Creator. We are truly sorry, and we humbly repent.**

**For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us;**

**that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways**

**to the glory of your name. Amen.**

*Celebrant* Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God’s mercy and forgiveness. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

*Celebrant* The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

*People* **And also with you.**

In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the Creator, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all,

let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For our holy house, and for all who offer their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord. **Amen.**

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia.

**Worthy is Christ the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God.**

**Power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and blessing, and glory are his.**

**This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia.**

**Sing with all the people of God, and join in the hymn of all creation:**

**Blessing, and honor, and glory, and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.**

**This is the feast of victory for our God. For the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign.**

**Alleluia. Alleluia.**

Let us pray together: **Almighty God, you have given your only Son to be for us a sacrifice for sin,**

**and also an example of godly life: Give us grace to receive thankfully the fruits of his redeeming work, and to follow daily in the blessed steps of his most holy life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.Amen.**

**First Reading Proverbs 9:1-6**

Wisdom has built her house, she has hewn her seven pillars.  
She has slaughtered her animals, she has mixed her wine, she has also set her table.  
She has sent out her servant-girls, she calls from the highest places in the town,  
“You that are simple, turn in here!”  
To those without sense she says, “Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed.  
Lay aside immaturity, and live, and walk in the way of insight.”

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm 34:9-14** *Benedicam Dominum*

9 Fear the Lord, you that are his saints, \*  
**for those who fear him lack nothing.**

10 The young lions lack and suffer hunger, \*  
**but those who seek the Lord lack nothing that is good.**

11 Come, children, and listen to me; \*  
**I will teach you the fear of the Lord.**

12 Who among you loves life \* **and desires long life to enjoy prosperity?**

13 Keep your tongue from evil-speaking \*  
**and your lips from lying words.**

14 Turn from evil and do good; \*  
**seek peace and pursue it.**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

**As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. World without end. Amen.**

**Second Reading Ephesians 5:15-20**

Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time,

because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms

and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel John 6:51-58**

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John. **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus said, “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.” The Jews then disputed

among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” So Jesus said to them,

“Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life

in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up

on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink

my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father,

so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

**Sermon**

**Nicene Creed** *Said by all.*

**We believe in one God, the Father Almighty,**

**maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,**

**eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,**

**true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father.**

**Through Him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit,**

**he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day He rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.**

**He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father**

**and the Son. With the Father and the Son, he is worshipped and glorified.**

**He has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.**

**We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

**Prayers of the People**

*Celebrant* With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church,

those in need, and all of God’s creation. In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

*Silence*

For this community, the nation, and the world;

**For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.**

For the peace and unity of the world;

**That a spirit of respect may grow among nations and peoples.**

For the just and proper use of your creation;

**For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.**

For all bishops and other ministers;

**For all who serve God in his Church.**

For all who love and trust in God, that divisions may cease;

**And that all may be one, as you and the Father are one.**

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;

**For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.**

For wisdom in this time of pandemic;

**That our actions may protect the health of ourselves and others.**

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation.

*Silence. The People may add their own petitions.*

Hear us, Lord;

**For your mercy is great.**

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life. *Silence.*

We will exalt you, O God our King;

**And praise your Name for ever and ever.**

We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom.

*Silence.* Lord, let your loving kindness be upon them.

**May they rest in your peace eternally.**

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy;

through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we pray together:

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name,**

**thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread.**

**And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

We pray together for Christ’s presence:

**My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the bread and wine.**

**I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul.**

**Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my heart.**

**I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.**

*Celebrant:* While we long to receive the sacrament of Christ's Body,  
*People:* **We become the sacrament of Christ's Body.** *Celebrant:* Let your lives be manna to feed our hunger for communion. *People:* **The love we share becomes bread for the world**.

**Blessing**

May the blessing of Christ’s light be on you - light without and light within.  
May the blessed sunlight shine on you and warm your heart till it glows.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be in you, among you,

and remain with you always. **Amen.**

**Dismissal**

Go in peace and hope and joy to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia. **Thanks be to God. Alleluia.**