

edify another.

20 For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.

21 It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

22 Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

23 And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

15:1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

2 Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.

3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

Here endeth the second lesson.

Homily to be written

Addresses for Morning and Evening Prayer

**according to the
1943 Lectionary
of the
USA 1928 Book of Common Prayer**

**Intended for use
by Layreaders
in the absence of a priest**

**by Ed Pacht
Rochester NH**

Epiphany 4

Morning Prayer A

First Lesson: Isa 61

Here beginneth the sixty-first chapter of the Prophet Isaiah.

1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

4 And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.

5 And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers.

6 But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.

7 For your shame ye shall have double; and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion:

8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of:

17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.

19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may

with great mercies will I gather thee.

8 In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.

Here endeth the first lesson.

Second Lesson: Romans 14:1-15:3

Here beginneth the fourteenth chapter of the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans.

1 Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.

2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.

3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them.

8 For I the LORD love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

9 And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the LORD hath blessed.

10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.

11 For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

Here endeth the first lesson.

Second Lesson: Luke 4:16-32

Here beginneth the sixteenth verse of the fourth chapter of the Gospel according to St. Luke.

16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

20 And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

22 And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

23 And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.

24 And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.

Homily to be written

Evening Prayer B

First Lesson: Isa 54:1-8

Here beginneth the fifty-fourth chapter of the Prophet Isaiah.

1 Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD.

2 Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes;

3 For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.

4 Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.

5 For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

6 For the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God.

7 For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but

and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting:

15 And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;

16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

17 And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

18 Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

20 Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

21 But he spake of the temple of his body.

22 When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.

24 But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men,

25 And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.

Here endeth the second lesson.

25 But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

26 But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

27 And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

28 And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

29 And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.

30 But he passing through the midst of them went his way,

31 And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days.

32 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.

Here endeth the second lesson.

Homily

Lord, Liar, or lunatic.

C. S. Lewis famously said
that these are the only choices one has
when one confronts Jesus Christ.

Those who would present Him as a great teacher,
or as a splendid moral example
have missed the point entirely.

They are choosing to ignore
the extraordinary claims He made about Himself.
A great teacher doesn't teach lies
about himself, does he?

Would you consider a teacher to be great
if the central part of his message is false?
A moral example doesn't live a lie, does he?
You wouldn't consider him very moral if he did.

Jesus made big claims,
and He made them on His own authority.
We'll see that as we consider today's Lessons.
There are only three things to be said
about someone who claims what He claimed.
Either he's telling the truth,
and thus is Lord, and must be heard,
and followed,
or he is lying through his teeth,
attempting to fool us all,
and should be avoided at all costs;
or, if he really believes what He's saying,
and it isn't true, well, then,
he's nuttier than a fruitcake,
and we ought to steer clear of him.
Those are the only choices we have.

*Here beginneth the twentieth verse
of the forty-fifth chapter of the Prophet Isaiah.*

20 Assemble yourselves and come; draw near
together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they
have no knowledge that set up the wood of their
graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save.

21 Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take
counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient
time? who hath told it from that time? have not I
the LORD? and there is no God else beside me; a
just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me.

22 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of
the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.

23 I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of
my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return,
That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue
shall swear.

24 Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I
righteousness and strength: even to him shall men
come; and all that are incensed against him shall
be ashamed.

25 In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be
justified, and shall glory.

Here endeth the first lesson.

Second Lesson: John 2:13-25

*Here beginneth the thirteenth verse of the second
chapter of the Gospel according to St. John.*

13 And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus
went up to Jerusalem.

14 And found in the temple those that sold oxen

become judges of evil thoughts?

5 Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

6 But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?

7 Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?

8 If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:

9 But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

11 For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

12 So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

13 For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

Here endeth the second lesson.

Homily to be written

Evening Prayer A

First Lesson: Isa 45:20-25

St. Luke gives us an engaging description of Jesus at a worship service.

He was in His hometown of Nazareth.

As He was a wandering teacher with a band of disciples,

it was only natural that the elders should invite him to say a few words from the Scripture.

That was the custom,

and it was good manners.

He took His place and unrolled the scroll

to the very reading from Isaiah

that we heard this morning

*“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me;
 because the LORD hath anointed me
 to preach good tidings unto the meek;
 he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
 to proclaim liberty to the captives,
 and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;
 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, ... ”*

At least as much as we heard today would have been read in that service,

and Jesus reread it,

looked boldly at the congregation, and said:

“This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.”

Whoops!

Did you hear that?

The preacher read Scripture, and applied it to himself!

Whoa!

That can't be right, can it?

Well, not if it's not true, it can't.

And He talked on
 -- about Himself,
 mentioning prophet after prophet,
 and claiming to be greater than all of them.
 What would you have thought?

If He were not all that He claimed to be,
 would you have taken him as a great teacher?
 Would you have listened to what He had to say?
 Or would you have reacted like they did?

You see,
 if they were right in rejecting those claims,
 they were right in rejecting Him altogether,
 in reacting with anger,
 in trying to get rid of Him,
 even in trying to kill Him,
 which the Law at that time called for
 in such cases.

And that is just what they did.
 But He slipped away and showed up
 in the synagogue at Capernaum,
 and preached there,
 probably in the same way,
 probably with the same message,
 certainly with uncomfortable boldness,
 and the reaction was a bit different.

*“And they were astonished at his doctrine:
 for his word was with power.”*

Was there less power at Nazareth?
 That seems very unlikely.
 It was the same preacher and the same message.
 There could not have been much more boldness
 than that sermon at Nazareth

chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in
 his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt;
 38 To drive out nations from before thee greater
 and mightier than thou art, to bring thee in, to give
 thee their land for an inheritance, as it is this day.

39 Know therefore this day, and consider it in
 thine heart, that the LORD he is God in heaven
 above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none
 else.

40 Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes, and his
 commandments, which I command thee this day,
 that it may go well with thee, and with thy children
 after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days
 upon the earth, which the LORD thy God giveth
 thee, for ever.

Here endeth the first lesson.

Second Lesson: James 2:1-13

*Here beginneth the second chapter of
 the Epistle of St. James.*

1 My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus
 Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.

2 For if there come unto your assembly a man with
 a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in
 also a poor man in vile raiment;

3 And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay
 clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good
 place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit
 here under my footstool:

4 Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are

and the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness.

12 And the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice.

13 And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.

32 For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and ask from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it?

33 Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?

34 Or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?

35 Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the LORD he is God; there is none else beside him.

36 Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee: and upon earth he shewed thee his great fire; and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire.

37 And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he

What was the difference?

The folk at Capernaum were hungry to hear from God,

not curious to hear a homeboy preach.

They heard the Word of God speaking to them.

Undoubtedly they failed to understand most of it, but they recognized from whence it came, and they felt the power that was in it.

In short, they accepted Him,

and therefore accepted His words

They saw the Lord,

not, as did the folks in Nazareth,

one who was either liar or lunatic.

As St. Paul said,

We preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified,

the incarnate Son of God who died and rose again, the One who Himself

IS the Way and the Truth and the Life.

We are not preaching the message He taught so much as the Message He is.

It's not really our job to teach morality.

Christian ethics is not the heart of the message.

Our burden is not to get people to keep the Law.

Oh, none of that is unimportant.

St. Paul said that the Law is a schoolmaster.

to teach us that we need Christ.

If we truly love Him we will want to follow Him, to do as He asks of us,

but we can't keep the law well enough to earn salvation.

We fail, and fail very badly sometimes.,

and so does the world around us.
 Do we get upset at all the evil we see?
 Well, we should.
 Are we surprised?
 We shouldn't be.
 Do we think we can force people to be good?
 That won't work.

Law, morality, ethics, these are all important,
 but they don't save.
 Good government doesn't save.
 Politics doesn't save.
 The very best rules fall short of saving,
 but Jesus does indeed save
 those who come to Him.

Are we preaching mere rules in our daily life?
 Are we giving the impression that
 if you're good enough you get to Heaven?
 Or are we introducing a sinful world to Jesus Christ?

Let us pray:

Blessed Lord, who hast given Holy Scripture to
 speak of the Christ, and hast called us by it to the
 Way of salvation; Grant that our hearts and our minds
 may be so filled with His love shown forth on the
 Cross, that we may walk with Him in holiness and
 righteousness, and that our lips and our lives may
 testify of Him, who is the Way and the Truth and the
 Life, even Jesus Christ, thine only Son our Lord.
 Amen.

Morning Prayer B

First Lesson: Deut 4:5-13, 32-40

*Here beginneth the fifth verse of the fourth chapter
 of the Book of Deuteronomy*

5 Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments,
 even as the LORD my God commanded me, that ye
 should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it.

6 Keep therefore and do them; for this is your
 wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the
 nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say,
 Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding
 people.

7 For what nation is there so great, who hath God
 so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all
 things that we call upon him for?

8 And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes
 and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I
 set before you this day?

9 Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul
 diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine
 eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart
 all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons,
 and thy sons' sons;

10 Specially the day that thou stoodest before the
 LORD thy God in Horeb, when the LORD said
 unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will
 make them hear my words, that they may learn to
 fear me all the days that they shall live upon the
 earth, and that they may teach their children.

11 And ye came near and stood under the mountain;