

## **Last Sunday after Pentecost Christ the King Sunday, Track 1 November 26, 2017**

**The Collect:** Almighty and everlasting God, whose will it is to restore all things in your well beloved Son, the King of kings and Lord of lords: Mercifully grant that the peoples of the earth, divided and enslaved by sin, may be freed and brought together under his most gracious rule; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.  
**Amen.**

### **Old Testament: Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24 read from the New Revised Standard Version Bible**

For thus says the Lord God: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord God. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

Therefore, thus says the Lord God to them: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted at all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide, I will save my flock, and they shall no longer be ravaged; and I will judge between sheep and sheep.

I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the Lord, have spoken.

### **The Word of the Lord**

## **Psalm 100 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer**

1 Be joyful in the Lord, all you lands; \* serve the Lord with gladness and come before his presence with a song.

2 Know this: The Lord himself is God; \* he himself has made us, and we are his; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

3 Enter his gates with thanksgiving; go into his courts with praise; \* give thanks to him and call upon his Name.

4 For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; \* and his faithfulness endures from age to age.

## **Epistle: Ephesians 1:15-23 read from the New Revised Standard Version Bible**

### **Anglicised**

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love towards all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

### **The Word of the Lord**

## **Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46 read from the Revised Standard Version Bible**

“When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep

at his right hand, but the goats at the left. Then the King will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee, or thirsty and give thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger and welcome thee, or naked and clothe thee? And when did we see thee sick or in prison and visit thee?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.' Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see thee hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to thee?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.' And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

### **The Gospel of the Lord**

**Closing Prayer:** On December 1 we remember Charles de Foucauld, Hermit and martyr in the Sahara read from *A Great Cloud of Witnesses*.

Charles de Foucauld, sometimes referred to as Brother Charles of Jesus, was the inspiration behind the founding of new religious communities for both men and women and is often credited with the revival of desert spirituality in the early twentieth century.

Born in Strasbourg, France, in 1858, Charles was orphaned at age six and raised by his grandparents. As a young man, he lost his faith, and, in spite of the discipline of his grandfather, whom he deeply respected, Charles lived a life that was a curious mix of laxity and stubbornness. After training as a career Army officer, Charles served in Algeria and Tunisia, until he resigned his commission in 1882. He then became an explorer in Morocco. There he encountered devout Muslims, whose practice of their faith inspired Charles to begin

a search for the faith that was his own. Upon returning to France, he continued his quest, and, in 1886, at age 28, re-discovered God and made a new commitment that would guide the rest of this life. A pilgrimage to the Holy Land deepened his commitment still further.

Charles entered the Cistercian Order of Strict Observance, the Trappists, first in France and then in Syria, for a commitment of seven years. He then returned to the Holy Land and lived as a servant to the convent of the Poor Clares in Nazareth. It was there that he began to develop a life of solitude, prayer, and adoration. The Poor Clares saw in him a vocation to the priesthood, encouraged him in spite of his reluctance, and Charles was ordained a priest in 1901.

Charles then moved to the Sahara, where his desire was to live a “ministry of presence” among “the furthest removed, the most abandoned.” He believed his call was to live among those whose faith and culture differed from his own. To witness to Christ among them was not to be eloquent preaching or missionary depends, but “to shout the Gospel with his life.” Charles sought to live so that those who saw his life would ask, “If such is th eservant, what must the Master be like?”

Charles lived among the Tuareg people, learning their language and culture as he ministered to them. He was shot to death outside his refuge by bandits on December 1, 1916. He is considered a martyr by the Roman Catholic Church.

**Let us pray:** Loving God, who restored the Christian faith of Charles de Foucauld through an encounter with Islam in North Africa and sustained him in the desert where he converted many with his witness of presence: Help us to know you wherever we find you, that with him, we may be faithful unto death; through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**