The Word of God

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost *September 1, 2024*

Prayer of the Day

O Lord, fully continue to purify and defend your Church. Since she cannot stand firmly without your power, govern her always by your grace; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

First Reading: Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9

1{Moses said,} "Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the rules that I am teaching you, and do them, that you may live, and go in and take possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving you. 2You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you.

6Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' 7For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? 8And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today? 9Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children's children …".

Psalm 119:129-136

129Your de- | crees are wonderful;*
therefore I obey them with | all my heart.
130When your word goes forth | it gives light;*
it gives understanding | to the simple.
131I open my | mouth and pant;*
I long for | your commandments.
132Turn to | me in mercy,*
as you always do to those who | love your name.
133Steady my footsteps | in your word;*
let no iniquity have dominion | over me.
134Rescue me from those | who oppress me,*
and I will keep | your commandments.
135Let your countenance shine up- | on your servant*
and teach | me your statutes.
136My eyes shed | streams of tears,*
because people do not | keep your law.

Second Reading: Ephesians 6:10-20

10Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. 11Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 12For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 13Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. 14Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. 16In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; 17and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, 18praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, 19and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, 20for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

Gospel: Mark 7:14-23

14{Jesus} called the people to him again and said to them, "Hear me, all of you, and understand: 15There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him." 17And when he had entered the house and left the people, his disciples asked him about the parable. 18And he said to them, "Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, 19since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?" (Thus he declared all foods clean.) 20And he said, "What comes out of a person is what defiles him. 21For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, 22coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. 23All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."

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