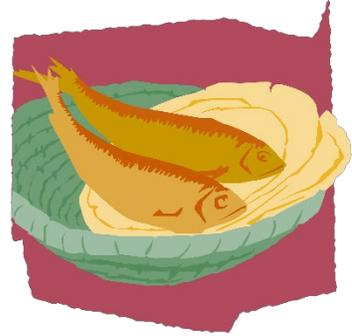


**Readings for Sunday, August 2, 2020**  
**The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost**



**AS WE GATHER**

Happiness and contentment are hard to find. Even with our abundance of possessions and opportunity, our hearts remain restless for things new and different, for the promise of something better. Paul reminds us that contentment does not come from having everything we desire, but with faith in the Lord, who is gracious and merciful and supplies all our needs. Today, we hear the terrible news of John the Baptist's martyrdom and a crowd restless with hunger. In the midst of it all, Jesus shows forth grace to rest our fears and satisfy us with all we need. We pray that we learn to trust in the Lord and to find contentment and peace in His grace sufficient for all things.

**Old Testament Reading, Isaiah 55:1–5**

(Come, all who hunger and thirst, and the Lord will satisfy you with all that you need.)

<sup>1</sup>“Come, everyone who thirsts,  
come to the waters;  
and he who has no money,  
come, buy and eat!

Come, buy wine and milk  
without money and without price.

<sup>2</sup>Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,  
and your labor for that which does not satisfy?  
Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good,  
and delight yourselves in rich food.

<sup>3</sup>Incline your ear, and come to me;  
hear, that your soul may live;  
and I will make with you an everlasting covenant,  
my steadfast, sure love for David.

<sup>4</sup>Behold, I made him a witness to the peoples,  
a leader and commander for the peoples.

<sup>5</sup>Behold, you shall call a nation that you do not know,  
and a nation that did not know you shall run to you,  
because of the Lord your God, and of the Holy One of Israel,  
for he has glorified you.”

## **Epistle Reading, *Romans 9:1–5 (6–13)***

(Paul anguishes over the people of Israel.)

<sup>1</sup>I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit—<sup>2</sup>that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. <sup>3</sup>For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh. <sup>4</sup>They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. <sup>5</sup>To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

<sup>6</sup>But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, <sup>7</sup>and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but “Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.” <sup>8</sup>This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring. <sup>9</sup>For this is what the promise said: “About this time next year I will return and Sarah shall have a son.” <sup>10</sup>And not only so, but also when Rebecca had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, <sup>11</sup>though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God’s purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of his call—<sup>12</sup>she was told, “The older will serve the younger.” <sup>13</sup>As it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”

## **Holy Gospel, *Matthew 14:13–21***

(Jesus feeds the five thousand, and all were satisfied.)

<sup>13</sup>Now when Jesus heard [about the death of John], he withdrew from there in a boat to a desolate place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. <sup>14</sup>When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick. <sup>15</sup>Now when it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a desolate place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves.” <sup>16</sup>But Jesus said, “They need not go away; you give them something to eat.” <sup>17</sup>They said to him, “We have only five loaves here and two fish.” <sup>18</sup>And he said, “Bring them here to me.” <sup>19</sup>Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. <sup>20</sup>And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. <sup>21</sup>And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.