

Readings — August 23, 2015

FIRST READING— Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18

¹ Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. ^{2a} And Joshua said to all the people,

¹⁴ “Now therefore revere the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. ¹⁵ Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

¹⁶ Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods; ¹⁷ for it is the Lord our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed;

¹⁸ and the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God.”

Psalm: Psalm 34:15-22

¹⁵ The eyes of the LORD are up- | on the righteous,
and God’s ears are open | to their cry.

¹⁶ **The face of the LORD is against those | who do evil,
to erase the remembrance of them | from the earth.**

¹⁷ The righteous cry, and | the LORD hears them
and delivers them from | all their troubles.

¹⁸ **The LORD is near to the | brokenhearted
and saves those whose spir- | its are crushed.**

¹⁹ Many are the troubles | of the righteous,
but the LORD delivers them from | every one.

²⁰ **God will keep safe | all their bones;
not one of them | shall be broken.**

²¹ Evil will bring death | to the wicked
and those who hate the righteous | will be punished.

²² **O LORD, you redeem the life | of your servants,
and those who put their trust in you will | not be punished.**

Gospel: John 6:56-69

[Jesus said,]⁵⁶ “Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them.⁵⁷ Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me.⁵⁸ 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.”⁵⁹ He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

⁶⁰ When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?”⁶¹ But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, “Does this offend you?⁶² Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?⁶³ It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.⁶⁴ But among you there are some who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him.⁶⁵ And he said, “For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.”

⁶⁶ Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him.⁶⁷ So Jesus asked the twelve, “Do you also wish to go away?”⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life.⁶⁹ We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”