

Second Sunday After Pentecost, Year C

June 6, 2010

1 Kings 17: 17-24, Psalm 30, Galatians 1: 11-24, Luke 7: 11-17

### **1 Kings 17: 17-24**

<sup>17</sup>After this the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became ill; his illness was so severe that there was no breath left in him. <sup>18</sup>She then said to Elijah, "What have you against me, O man of God? You have come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to cause the death of my son!" <sup>19</sup>But he said to her, "Give me your son." He took him from her bosom, carried him up into the upper chamber where he was lodging, and laid him on his own bed. <sup>20</sup>He cried out to the Lord, "O Lord my God, have you brought calamity even upon the widow with whom I am staying, by killing her son?" <sup>21</sup>Then he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried out to the Lord, "O Lord my God, let this child's life come into him again." <sup>22</sup>The Lord listened to the voice of Elijah; the life of the child came into him again, and he revived. <sup>23</sup>Elijah took the child, brought him down from the upper chamber into the house, and gave him to his mother; then Elijah said, "See, your son is alive." <sup>24</sup>So the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth."

### **Psalm 30**

<sup>1</sup>I will extol you, O Lord, for you have drawn me up, and did not let my foes rejoice over me.

<sup>2</sup>O Lord my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me.

<sup>3</sup>O Lord, you brought up my soul from Sheol, restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit.

<sup>4</sup>Sing praises to the Lord, O you his faithful ones, and give thanks to his holy name.

<sup>5</sup>For his anger is but for a moment; his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

<sup>6</sup>As for me, I said in my prosperity, "I shall never be moved."

<sup>7</sup>By your favor, O Lord, you had established me as a strong mountain; you hid your face; I was dismayed.

<sup>8</sup>To you, O Lord, I cried, and to the Lord I made supplication:

<sup>9</sup>"What profit is there in my death, if I go down to the Pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it tell of your faithfulness?"

<sup>10</sup>Hear, O Lord, and be gracious to me! O Lord, be my helper!"

<sup>11</sup>You have turned my mourning into dancing; you have taken off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy,

<sup>12</sup>so that my soul may praise you and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever.

### **Galatians 1: 11-24**

<sup>11</sup>For I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel that was proclaimed by me is not of human origin;

<sup>12</sup>for I did not receive it from a human source, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ. <sup>13</sup>You have heard, no doubt, of my earlier life in Judaism. I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it. <sup>14</sup>I advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors. <sup>15</sup>But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased <sup>16</sup>to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with any human being, <sup>17</sup>nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were already apostles before me, but I went away at once into Arabia, and afterwards I returned to Damascus. <sup>18</sup>Then after three years I did go up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days; <sup>19</sup>but I did not see any other apostle except James the Lord's brother. <sup>20</sup>In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie! <sup>21</sup>Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia, <sup>22</sup>and I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea that are in Christ; <sup>23</sup>they only heard it said, "The one who formerly was persecuting us is now proclaiming the faith he once tried to destroy." <sup>24</sup>And they glorified God because of me.

### **Luke 7: 11-17**

<sup>11</sup>Soon afterwards [Jesus] went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. <sup>12</sup>As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow; and with her was a large crowd from the town. <sup>13</sup>When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, "Do not weep." <sup>14</sup>Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, rise!" <sup>15</sup>The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. <sup>16</sup>Fear seized all of them; and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen among us!" and "God

has looked favorably on his people!”<sup>17</sup> This word about him spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding country.

### Confirmation Message

In a few moments each of the confirmands will be making a “faith statement”, putting into words a little bit about their experiences during these past two years of preparation.

The reading from St. Paul’s *Letter to the Galatians*, as it turns out, is one example of Paul’s “faith statement”, an attempt to put into words what his encounter with the Gospel message and with the love of God as made known in Jesus meant to him.

All of the letters, except *Galatians*, begin with a greeting and then a section where St. Paul says some really nice things about the people to whom he is writing, kind of “buttering them up”. In *Galatians* it is pretty clear that St. Paul is angry and very impassioned. After the greeting he gets right down to business and tells them that they have moved away from the message of Gospel grace they received from him. It turns out that other Christian preachers from a more strict Jewish background followed in St. Paul’s steps and would go into the communities and say that Paul “didn’t quite get the message right”. Yes, they would say, it is all about grace, but there is something more, something else.

St. Paul had so clearly heard and received the message of grace that it drove him crazy whenever anyone tried to alter it in any way. For him, grace was at the heart of the Gospel. This is probably why the *Letter to the Galatians* was Martin Luther’s’ favorite.

I hope that throughout our two years together you have heard that message of grace as well. I hope it will sustain you in the years ahead. And that. Like St. Paul, your encounter with Jesus has changed you.

These days, there is another message you hear all the time. Rather than the unconditional and free love of God, you are constantly being told that you need “something else” in order to “measure up” or be really “worthy”. You need the right friends, the right clothes, the right music, the right “look”, etc., etc.

Today is not so much an ending as a new beginning. Today you publicly and freely proclaim the faith that has surrounded you these many years. Today you commit yourselves to the continuing journey.

You don’t have to go forward on your own. Remember that you have a community of family and friends to support and encourage you. Amen.