

**COLLECT**

Almighty God,  
whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain,  
and entered not into glory before he was crucified:  
mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross,  
may find it none other than the way of life and peace;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**READINGS (NIV)**

**Isa. 55:1-9**

"Come, all you who are thirsty,  
come to the waters;  
and you who have no money,  
come, buy and eat!  
Come, buy wine and milk  
without money and without cost.  
Why spend money on what is not bread,  
and your labour on what does not satisfy?  
Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good,  
and your soul will delight in the richest of fare.  
Give ear and come to me;  
hear me, that your soul may live.  
I will make an everlasting covenant with you,  
my faithful love promised to David.  
See, I have made him a witness to the peoples,  
a leader and commander of the peoples.  
Surely you will summon nations you know not,  
and nations that do not know you will hasten to you,  
because of the LORD your God,  
the Holy One of Israel,  
for he has endowed you with splendour."  
Seek the LORD while he may be found;  
call on him while he is near.  
Let the wicked forsake his way  
and the evil man his thoughts.  
Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him,  
and to our God, for he will freely pardon.  
"For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
neither are your ways my ways,"  
declares the LORD.  
"As the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so are my ways higher than your ways  
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

**1 Cor. 10:1-13**

For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. They were all baptised into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered over the desert.

Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: "The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in pagan revelry." We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did—and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died. We should not test the Lord, as some of them did—and were killed by snakes. And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel.

These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfilment of the ages has come. So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

**GOSPEL (NIV)**

**Lk. 13:1-9**

Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. Jesus answered, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish."

Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree, planted in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it, but did not find any. So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?'

" 'Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.' "