

Sunday

17th September 2023
3rd Sunday of Creationtide

COLLECT

Almighty God,
You have broken the tyranny of sin
and have sent the Spirit of your
Son into our hearts whereby we
call you Father: give us grace to
dedicate our freedom to your
service, that we and all creation
may be brought to the glorious
liberty of the children of God;
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.

FIRST READING

Leviticus 25.1-7

The Lord spoke to Moses on
Mount Sinai, saying: Speak to the
people of Israel and say to them:
When you enter the land that I am
giving you, the land shall observe a
Sabbath for the Lord. For six years
you shall sow your field, and for six
years you shall prune your
vineyard, and gather in their yield;
but in the seventh year there shall
be a sabbath of complete rest for
the land, a sabbath for the Lord:
you shall not sow your field or
prune your vineyard. You shall not
reap the aftergrowth of your
harvest or gather the grapes of
your unpruned vine: it shall be a
year of complete rest for the land.
You may eat what the land yields
during its sabbath - you, your male
and female slaves, your hired and
your bound labourers who live with
you; for your livestock also, and for
the wild animals in your land all its
yield shall be for food.

PSALM

Psalm 95

R. *Come, let us worship and bow
down*

O come, let us sing to the Lord; let
us heartily rejoice in the rock of our
salvation. Let us come into his
presence with thanksgiving and be
glad in him with psalms. For the
Lord is a great God and a great
king above all gods. **R.**

In his hand are the depths of the
earth and the heights of the
mountains are his also. The sea is
his, for he made it, and his hands
have moulded the dry land. Come
let us worship and bow down and
kneel before the Lord our Maker.
For he is our God; we are the
people of his pasture and the
sheep of his hand. **R.**

O that today you would listen to
his voice: 'Harden not your hearts
as at Meribah, on that day at
Massah in the wilderness, 'When
your forebears tested me, and put
me to the proof, though they had
seen my works. 'Forty years long I
detested that generation and said,
'This people are wayward in their
hearts; they do not know my
ways.' 'So I swore in my wrath,
'They shall not enter into my rest.'"
R.

SECOND READING

Hebrews 4.1-11

Therefore, while the promise of
entering his rest is still open, let us
take care that none of you should
seem to have failed to reach it.
For indeed the good news came to
us just as to them; but the
message they heard did not
benefit them, because they were
not united by faith with those who
listened. For we who have believed
enter that rest, just as God has
said, 'As in my anger I swore, 'they
shall not enter my rest', though his
works were finished at the
foundation of the world. For in one
place it speaks about the seventh
day as follows: 'And God rested on
the seventh day from all his
works.' And again in this place it
says, 'They shall not enter my
rest.' Since therefore it remains
open for some to enter it, and
those who formerly received the
good news failed to enter because
of disobedience, again he sets a
certain day - 'today' saying
through David much later, in the
words already quoted, 'Today if
you hear his voice, do not harden
your hearts.' For if Joshua had
given them rest, God would not
speak later about another day. So
then, a sabbath rest still remains
for the people of God; for those

who enter God's rest also cease
from their labours as God did from
his. Let us therefore make every
effort to enter that rest, so that no
one may fall through such
disobedience as theirs.

GOSPEL

John 6.1-15

After this Jesus went to the other
side of the Sea of Galilee, also
called the Sea of Tiberias. A large
crowd kept following him, because
they saw the signs that he was
doing for the sick. Jesus went up
the mountain and sat down there
with his disciples. Now the
Passover, the festival of the Jews
was near. When he looked up and
saw a large crowd coming towards
him, Jesus said to Philip, 'Where
are we to buy bread for these
people to eat?' He said this to test
him, for he himself knew what he
was going to do. Philip answered
him, 'Six months' wages would not
buy enough bread for each of
them to get a little.' One of his
disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's
brother, said to him, 'There is a
boy here who has five barley
loaves and two fish. But what are
they among so many people?'
Jesus said, 'Make the people sit
down.' Now there was a great deal
of grass in the place; so they sat
down, about five thousand in all.
Then Jesus took the loaves, and
when he had given thanks, he
distributed them to those who
were seated; so also the fish, as
much as they wanted. When they
were satisfied, he told his
disciples, 'Gather up the fragments
left over, so that nothing may be
lost.' So they gathered them up,
and from the fragments of the five
barley loaves, left by those who
had eaten, they filled twelve
baskets. When the people saw the
sign that he had done, they began
to say, 'This is indeed the prophet
who is to come into the world.'
When Jesus realised that they
were about to come and take him
by force to make him king, he
withdrew again to the mountain by
himself.