

First Reading - Acts 17.16-34

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

On arriving in Athens, Paul was disturbed to find
that the city was full of idols.

Daily, in both the synagogue and the market-place,
he set out the good news
about Jesus and the resurrection.

Some of the philosophers accused him
of speaking nonsense,
or promoting foreign gods,
but some wanted to hear more.

Indeed all those who gathered in Athens
were keen to hear all that was new.

So Paul stood before them, and said,
'People of Athens,

I see how extremely religious you are, in every way;
for as I walked through the city,
and looked carefully at the objects of your worship,
I found amongst them an altar
with the inscription: "To an unknown god."

That which you worship as unknown,
I now proclaim to you.

The God who made the world, and everything in it,
the Lord of heaven and earth,
does not live in any shrine made by human hands,
or depend (like your idols) on human care,
but is the one who gives to us
life, and breath, and all that we have.

From just one ancient ancestor,
God made all nations, to inhabit the whole earth,
determining their various times and places in history;
so every nation equally can search for God,
reach out for God, and find God; and indeed God is
not far away from any one of us.

For, as your own poets have said,
"we are all children of God," and "it is in God
that we live, and move, and have our being".

As children of God, we should not
think of God as an image,
in gold, or silver, or stone,
created by human art or imagination!

God has graciously overlooked
the times of human ignorance,

but God now calls upon
all people everywhere to repent.

And God has set the date
on which the world will be judged, in righteousness,
by a human being God has appointed - and has
raised from the dead, so that all may believe.'

Some now mocked, when Paul spoke
of the resurrection of the dead.

But others said, 'We will hear you again, about this.'

And some followed Paul,
and became believers,
including
at least one member of the council,
and a woman, named Damaris,
and others with them.

This is the word of the Lord.

Second Reading - Revelation 22.12-14,16-17,20-21

A reading from the book of Revelation.

I heard a voice from heaven, saying: 'See,
I am coming soon, bringing my reward
for each, according to their deeds.

I am the Alpha and the Omega,
the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

Blessed are those who wash their robes, and
enter the city by its gates, and find
the tree of life.

I, Jesus, sent my angel to you
with this vision, and this message, for the churches.

I am both the root and the branch of David,
and the bright morning star.

And now, the Spirit and the bride say, "Come".

Let everyone who hears them say, "Come".

Let all who are thirsty
come to receive
the free gift
of the water of life.

See, I am coming soon.'

Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!

And may the grace of the Lord Jesus
be with all the saints.

This is the word of the Lord.

Gospel - John 17.20-26

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to John.

Jesus looked up to heaven, and said, 'Father, I ask
not only on behalf of these, but also
on behalf of those who will believe in me
through their word.

May they all be one.

As you live in me,
and I live in you,
may they live in us.

And through this, may the world come to believe
that you sent me.

The glory that you gave to me, I have given to them.

May they be one, as we are one.

As I live in them, and you live in me,
may the world know

that you sent me,
and that you have loved them
as you have loved me.

Father, I pray also
that those you have given to me
will continue to be with me,
to see the glory that you have given to me,
having loved me
since before the foundation of the world.

Most Holy Father,
the world does not know you,
but I know you;

and these know
that you have sent me.

I have made you known to them,
and I will continue to make you known to them,
so that the love, with which you have loved me,
may be in them, as I live in them.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.