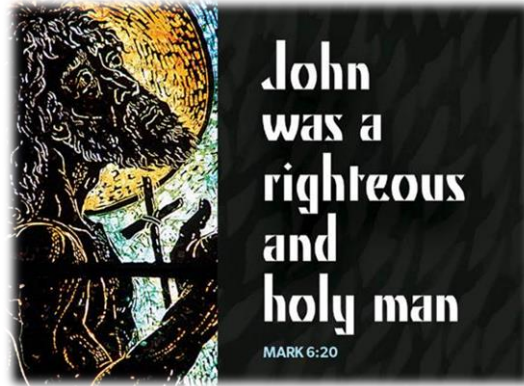


About the Readings on July 14, 2024

***Click on the links for the Bible Verse(s)

Sunday, July 10–16

Lectionary 15



Using the words from Ephesians, we can say that all summer long we gather to hear the word of truth of God’s good pleasure and will and to bless God at the table of his glorious grace.

[Amos 7:7-15](#)

Sometimes the first reading presents a parallel to the gospel reading. Amos 7 is one such selection. Amos, like John the Baptist, also was rejected by the king for preaching against political injustice. Worshipers might be helped to understand this reading were the service folder to include a simple map that also identifies the characters named.

[The Psalm for the Day](#)

Having heard about the king’s rejection of the prophet Amos, we join in singing [Psalm 85:8-13](#). By praying these words, we align ourselves with the ancient people of Judah whom Amos is criticizing, and we then beg God for forgiveness. The line that “righteousness and peace have kissed each other” is particularly poignant in light of today’s gospel reading.

[Ephesians 1:3-14](#)

Today begins seven Sundays of a semicontinuous reading of Ephesians. Which of the twenty-two phrases in this reading can be highlighted today? Being blessed by Christ, holy and blameless, adopted as God’s children, and marked with the seal of the Spirit, we who are baptized can praise God’s glory and face down the Herods of this world.

[Mark 6:14-29](#)

The sex and violence hinted at in this narrative have led to its popularity with artists. For believing Christians it can be a picture of the lengths to which political injustice might go toward its self-protection and of the possibility that Christian faithfulness can lead to persecution. Christ, to whom John points and whom he prefigures, is both the one who preaches against injustice and the one whose head was on the platter for us. Our weekly meal contrasts with Herod’s banquet.