



God's Word for this Week

This Sunday is also known as Rogation Sunday, the day on which the Church has traditionally offered prayer for God's blessings on the fruits of the earth and the labours of those who produce our food. Rogation and Harvest are the two bookends of the part of the Church's year of Ordinary Time when the liturgical colour green is used to represent Growth and Restoration.

The word 'rogation' comes from a Latin word (rogare), that means to ask or to beg. Historically, the Rogation Days – the three weekdays before Ascension Day – were a period of fasting and abstinence, asking for God's blessing on the crops for a bountiful harvest.

This week our Readings are chosen to reflect this earth as a gift from God as we consider our part in its safekeeping.

The Collect of the Word

Almighty God,
whose will it is that the earth and the sea
should bear fruit in due season:
Bless the labours of those who work on land and sea,
grant us a good harvest
and the grace always to rejoice in your fatherly care;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Old Testament Reading

Deuteronomy 11: 11-15



11 But the land you are crossing the Jordan to take possession of is a land of mountains and valleys that drinks rain from heaven. **12** It is a land the Lord your God cares for; the eyes of the Lord your God are continually on it from the beginning of the year to its end.

13 So if you faithfully obey the commands I am giving you today—to love the Lord your God and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul— **14** then I will send rain on your land in its season, both autumn and spring rains, so that you may gather in your grain, new wine and olive oil. **15** I will provide grass in the fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied.

The Epistle Reading

Romans 8:18-25

18 I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. 19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; 20 for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; 23 and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in* hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes* for what is seen? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.



The Gospel Reading

Mark 4:26-32

26 He also said, 'The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, 27 and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. 28 The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. 29 But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come.' 30 He also said, 'With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? 31 It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; 32 yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.'



Psalm 147

O sing to the Lord a song of thanksgiving :
sing praises to our God upon the harp.
He covers the heavens with cloud,
and prepares rain for the earth :
and makes the grass to sprout upon the mountains.
He gives the cattle their food :
and feeds the young ravens that call to him.
He takes no pleasure in the strength of a horse :
nor does he delight in any man's legs,
But the Lord's delight is in those that fear him :
who wait in hope for his mercy.
Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem :
sing praises to your God, O Zion.
For he has strengthened the bars of your gates :
and blessed your children within you.
He makes peace within your borders :
and satisfies you with the finest wheat.
He sends his command to the earth :
and his word runs very swiftly.
He gives snow like wool :
and scatters the hoar-frost like ashes.
He sprinkles his ice like morsels of bread :
and the waters harden at his frost.
He sends out his word and melts them :
he blows with his wind and the waters flow.
He made his word known to Jacob :
his statutes and judgements to Israel.
He has not dealt so with any other nation :
nor have they knowledge of his laws.
Praise the Lord.

Prayers of Thanksgiving

Let us celebrate today the providence of God and the gift of work.
We give thanks to God our Father, Maker of the universe,
for the unity and order of created things;
for the resources of the earth;
for the gift of human life;
for our share in the continuing work of creation.

Almighty God, Creator and Lord of all things, we thank you for the vast resources of the earth and the sea, and for the hidden forces of nature now brought within our control by scientific discovery. We thank you again for the different abilities and skills which you have given us and which we use in daily work. Help us to use all your gifts wisely and faithfully for the benefit of humankind, that all may rejoice in your goodness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

We thank you for humanity in all its diversity, for the unique individuality of every child, woman and man, for the gathered communities of home, work and leisure, of village, city and nation.

We thank you for the work of hand and mind; for the opportunity to plan and design, to manufacture and grow, to service and conserve, and to care for one another in the places where we work.

Above all we thank you for your Son Jesus Christ, who carried out your work to your praise and glory and for the renewal of your creation. We make our prayer to you in his name, who died and rose again for us. **Amen.**