

YEAR 1, PROPER 25, MONDAY: EVENING PRAYER

The First Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from the Book of Ecclesiasticus

One who trusts others too quickly is lightminded, and one who sins does wrong to himself. One who rejoices in wickedness will be condemned, and for one who hates gossip evil is lessened. Never repeat a conversation, and you will lose nothing at all. With friend or foe do not report it, and unless it would be a sin for you, do not disclose it; for some one has heard you and watched you, and when the time comes he will hate you. Have you heard a word? Let it die with you. Be brave! It will not make you burst! With such a word a fool will suffer pangs like a woman in labor with a child. Like an arrow stuck in the flesh of the thigh, so is a word inside a fool. Question a friend, perhaps he did not do it; but if he did anything, so that he may do it no more. Question a neighbor, perhaps he did not say it; but if he said it, so that he may not say it again. Question a friend, for often it is slander; so do not believe everything you hear. A person may make a slip without intending it. Who has never sinned with his tongue? Question your neighbor

before you threaten him; and let the law of the Most High take its course.

The Reader concludes

The Word of the Lord.

The Second Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from the Gospel According to Matthew

Jesus answered the scribes and Pharisees, “When the unclean spirit has gone out of a man, he passes through waterless places seeking rest, but he finds none. Then he says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ And when he comes he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. Then he goes and brings with him seven other spirits more evil than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. So shall it be also with this evil generation.” While he was still speaking to the people, behold, his mother and his brothers stood outside, asking to speak to him. But he replied to the man who told him, “Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?” And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, and sister, and mother.”

The Reader concludes

The Word of the Lord.