**Year 2, Lent 3, Saturday: Evening Prayer**

**For use with the First Lesson**

Adapted from *The Vocabulary of the Church* (1960):

Euphra'tes yuu-FRAY-teez

*The First Lesson. The Reader begins*

## A Reading from the Book of Jeremiah

Thus said the Lord to me, “Go and buy a linen waistcloth, and put it on your loins, and do not dip it in water.” So I bought a waistcloth according to the word of the Lord, and put it on my loins. And the word of the Lord came to me a second time, “Take the waistcloth which you have bought, which is upon your loins, and arise, go to the Euphra'tes, and hide it there in a cleft of the rock.” So I went, and hid it by the Euphra'tes, as the Lord commanded me. And after many days the Lord said to me, “Arise, go to the Euphra'tes, and take from there the waistcloth which I commanded you to hide there.” Then I went to the Euphra'tes, and dug, and I took the waistcloth from the place where I had hidden it. And behold, the waistcloth was spoiled; it was good for nothing. Then the word of the Lord came to me: “Thus says the Lord: Even so will I spoil the pride of Judah and the great pride of Jerusalem. This evil people, who refuse to hear my words, who stubbornly follow their own heart and have gone after other gods to serve them and worship them, shall be like this waistcloth, which is good for nothing. For as the waistcloth clings to the loins of a man, so I made the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah cling to me, says the Lord, that they might be for me a people, a name, a praise, and a glory, but they would not listen.”

*The Reader concludes* The Word of the Lord.

# The Second Lesson. The Reader begins

**A Reading from the**

**First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians**

I want you to know, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same supernatural food and all drank the same supernatural drink. For they drank from the supernatural Rock which followed them, and the Rock was Christ. Nevertheless with most of them God was not pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things are warnings for us, not to desire evil as they did. Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to dance.” We must not indulge in immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. We must not put the Lord to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents; nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. Now these things happened to them as a warning, but they were written down for our instruction, upon whom the end of the ages has come. Therefore let any one who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with the temptation will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. Therefore, my beloved, shun the worship of idols. I speak as to sensible men; judge for yourselves what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. Consider the people of Israel; are not those who eat the sacrifices partners in the altar? What do I imply then? That food offered to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be partners with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. Shall we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he? “All things are lawful,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful,” but not all things build up. Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor. Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience. For “the earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it.” If one of the unbelievers invites you to dinner and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you without raising any question on the ground of conscience. (But if some one says to you, “This has been offered in sacrifice,” then out of consideration for the man who informed you, and for conscience’ sake—I mean his conscience, not yours—do not eat it.) For why should my liberty be determined by another man’s scruples? If I partake with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of that for which I give thanks? So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please all men in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved. Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

*The Reader concludes* The Word of the Lord.