Readings for Morning Prayer, Week of March 30

**Monday, March 30**

 **Psalm 31**

## First Reading: Exodus 4:10-31

10 But Moses said to the Lord, ‘O my Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor even now that you have spoken to your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.’ 11Then the Lord said to him, ‘Who gives speech to mortals? Who makes them mute or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? 12Now go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you are to speak.’ 13But he said, ‘O my Lord, please send someone else.’ 14Then the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses and he said, ‘What of your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he can speak fluently; even now he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you his heart will be glad. 15You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth; and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and will teach you what you shall do. 16He indeed shall speak for you to the people; he shall serve as a mouth for you, and you shall serve as God for him. 17Take in your hand this staff, with which you shall perform the signs.’

18 Moses went back to his father-in-law Jethro and said to him, ‘Please let me go back to my kindred in Egypt and see whether they are still living.’ And Jethro said to Moses, ‘Go in peace.’ 19The Lord said to Moses in Midian, ‘Go back to Egypt; for all those who were seeking your life are dead.’ 20So Moses took his wife and his sons, put them on a donkey, and went back to the land of Egypt; and Moses carried the staff of God in his hand.

21 And the Lord said to Moses, ‘When you go back to Egypt, see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders that I have put in your power; but I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go. 22Then you shall say to Pharaoh, “Thus says the Lord: Israel is my firstborn son.23I said to you, ‘Let my son go that he may worship me.’ But you refused to let him go; now I will kill your firstborn son.” ’

24 On the way, at a place where they spent the night, the Lord met him and tried to kill him. 25But Zipporah took a flint and cut off her son’s foreskin, and touched Moses’\* feet with it, and said, ‘Truly you are a bridegroom of blood to me!’ 26So he let him alone. It was then she said, ‘A bridegroom of blood by circumcision.’

27 The Lord said to Aaron, ‘Go into the wilderness to meet Moses.’ So he went; and he met him at the mountain of God and kissed him. 28Moses told Aaron all the words of the Lord with which he had sent him, and all the signs with which he had charged him. 29Then Moses and Aaron went and assembled all the elders of the Israelites. 30Aaron spoke all the words that the Lord had spoken to Moses, and performed the signs in the sight of the people. 31The people believed; and when they heard that the Lord had given heed to the Israelites and that he had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshipped.

## Second Reading: Mark 9:30-41

30 They went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; 31for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, ‘The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again.’ 32But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him.

33 Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, ‘What were you arguing about on the way?’ 34But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. 35He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, ‘Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.’ 36Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, 37‘Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.’

38 John said to him, ‘Teacher, we saw someone\* casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us.’39But Jesus said, ‘Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterwards to speak evil of me. 40Whoever is not against us is for us. 41For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

**Tuesday, March 31**

**Psalms 121, 122, 123**

## First Reading: Exodus 5:1-6:1

Afterwards Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, ‘Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, “Let my people go, so that they may celebrate a festival to me in the wilderness.” ’ 2But Pharaoh said, ‘Who is the Lord, that I should heed him and let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, and I will not let Israel go.’ 3Then they said, ‘The God of the Hebrews has revealed himself to us; let us go a three days’ journey into the wilderness to sacrifice to the Lord our God, or he will fall upon us with pestilence or sword.’ 4But the king of Egypt said to them, ‘Moses and Aaron, why are you taking the people away from their work? Get to your labours!’5Pharaoh continued, ‘Now they are more numerous than the people of the land \* and yet you want them to stop working!’ 6That same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people, as well as their supervisors,7‘You shall no longer give the people straw to make bricks, as before; let them go and gather straw for themselves. 8But you shall require of them the same quantity of bricks as they have made previously; do not diminish it, for they are lazy; that is why they cry, “Let us go and offer sacrifice to our God.” 9Let heavier work be laid on them; then they will labour at it and pay no attention to deceptive words.’

10 So the taskmasters and the supervisors of the people went out and said to the people, ‘Thus says Pharaoh, “I will not give you straw. 11Go and get straw yourselves, wherever you can find it; but your work will not be lessened in the least.” ’ 12So the people scattered throughout the land of Egypt, to gather stubble for straw. 13The taskmasters were urgent, saying, ‘Complete your work, the same daily assignment as when you were given straw.’ 14And the supervisors of the Israelites, whom Pharaoh’s taskmasters had set over them, were beaten, and were asked, ‘Why did you not finish the required quantity of bricks yesterday and today, as you did before?’

15 Then the Israelite supervisors came to Pharaoh and cried, ‘Why do you treat your servants like this? 16No straw is given to your servants, yet they say to us, “Make bricks!” Look how your servants are beaten! You are unjust to your own people.’\* 17He said, ‘You are lazy, lazy; that is why you say, “Let us go and sacrifice to the Lord.” 18Go now, and work; for no straw shall be given you, but you shall still deliver the same number of bricks.’ 19The Israelite supervisors saw that they were in trouble when they were told, ‘You shall not lessen your daily number of bricks.’ 20As they left Pharaoh, they came upon Moses and Aaron who were waiting to meet them. 21They said to them, ‘The Lord look upon you and judge! You have brought us into bad odour with Pharaoh and his officials, and have put a sword in their hand to kill us.’ 22 Then Moses turned again to the Lord and said, ‘O Lord, why have you mistreated this people? Why did you ever send me? 23Since I first came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has mistreated this people, and you have done nothing at all to deliver your people.’

6Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh: Indeed, by a mighty hand he will let them go; by a mighty hand he will drive them out of his land.’

**Second Reading: Mark 9:42-50**

42 ‘If any of you put a stumbling-block before one of these little ones who believe in me,\* it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea. 43If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell,\* to the unquenchable fire.\*45And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell.\*,\* 47And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell,\* 48where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

49 ‘For everyone will be salted with fire.\* 50Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it?\* Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.’

**Wednesday, April**

**Psalm 119:145-176**

## First reading: Exodus 7:8-24

8 The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, 9‘When Pharaoh says to you, “Perform a wonder”, then you shall say to Aaron, “Take your staff and throw it down before Pharaoh, and it will become a snake.” ’ 10So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did as the Lord had commanded; Aaron threw down his staff before Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a snake. 11Then Pharaoh summoned the wise men and the sorcerers; and they also, the magicians of Egypt, did the same by their secret arts.12Each one threw down his staff, and they became snakes; but Aaron’s staff swallowed up theirs. 13Still Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the Lord had said.

14 Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Pharaoh’s heart is hardened; he refuses to let the people go. 15Go to Pharaoh in the morning, as he is going out to the water; stand by at the river bank to meet him, and take in your hand the staff that was turned into a snake. 16Say to him, “The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you to say, ‘Let my people go, so that they may worship me in the wilderness.’ But until now you have not listened. 17Thus says the Lord, ‘By this you shall know that I am the Lord.’ See, with the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water that is in the Nile, and it shall be turned to blood. 18The fish in the river shall die, the river itself shall stink, and the Egyptians shall be unable to drink water from the Nile.” ’ 19The Lord said to Moses, ‘Say to Aaron, “Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt—over its rivers, its canals, and its ponds, and all its pools of water—so that they may become blood; and there shall be blood throughout the whole land of Egypt, even in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone.” ’

20 Moses and Aaron did just as the Lord commanded. In the sight of Pharaoh and of his officials he lifted up the staff and struck the water in the river, and all the water in the river was turned into blood, 21and the fish in the river died. The river stank so that the Egyptians could not drink its water, and there was blood throughout the whole land of Egypt. 22But the magicians of Egypt did the same by their secret arts; so Pharaoh’s heart remained hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the Lordhad said. 23Pharaoh turned and went into his house, and he did not take even this to heart. 24And all the Egyptians had to dig along the Nile for water to drink, for they could not drink the water of the river.

## Second reading: Mark 10:1-16

He left that place and went to the region of Judea and\* beyond the Jordan. And crowds again gathered around him; and, as was his custom, he again taught them.

2 Some Pharisees came, and to test him they asked, ‘Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?’ 3He answered them, ‘What did Moses command you?’ 4They said, ‘Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her.’ 5But Jesus said to them, ‘Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you. 6But from the beginning of creation, “God made them male and female.” 7“For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife,\* 8and the two shall become one flesh.” So they are no longer two, but one flesh.9Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.’

10 Then in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter.11He said to them, ‘Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; 12and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.’

13 People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. 14But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, ‘Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. 15Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.’ 16And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

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**Thursday, April 2**

**Psalm 131, 132**

## First reading: Exodus 7:25-8:19

25 Seven days passed after the Lord had struck the Nile.

\*Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Go to Pharaoh and say to him, “Thus says the Lord: Let my people go, so that they may worship me. 2If you refuse to let them go, I will plague your whole country with frogs. 3The river shall swarm with frogs; they shall come up into your palace, into your bedchamber and your bed, and into the houses of your officials and of your people,\* and into your ovens and your kneading bowls. 4The frogs shall come up on you and on your people and on all your officials.” ’ 5\*And the Lord said to Moses, ‘Say to Aaron, “Stretch out your hand with your staff over the rivers, the canals, and the pools, and make frogs come up on the land of Egypt.” ’ 6So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt; and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. 7But the magicians did the same by their secret arts, and brought frogs up on the land of Egypt.

8 Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron, and said, ‘Pray to the Lord to take away the frogs from me and my people, and I will let the people go to sacrifice to the Lord.’ 9Moses said to Pharaoh, ‘Kindly tell me when I am to pray for you and for your officials and for your people, that the frogs may be removed from you and your houses and be left only in the Nile.’ 10And he said, ‘Tomorrow.’ Moses said, ‘As you say! So that you may know that there is no one like the Lord our God, 11the frogs shall leave you and your houses and your officials and your people; they shall be left only in the Nile.’ 12Then Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh; and Moses cried out to the Lord concerning the frogs that he had brought upon Pharaoh.\* 13And the Lord did as Moses requested: the frogs died in the houses, the courtyards, and the fields. 14And they gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank. 15But when Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart, and would not listen to them, just as the Lord had said.

16 Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Say to Aaron, “Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the earth, so that it may become gnats throughout the whole land of Egypt.” ’ 17And they did so; Aaron stretched out his hand with his staff and struck the dust of the earth, and gnats came on humans and animals alike; all the dust of the earth turned into gnats throughout the whole land of Egypt. 18The magicians tried to produce gnats by their secret arts, but they could not. There were gnats on both humans and animals. 19And the magicians said to Pharaoh, ‘This is the finger of God!’ But Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, just as the Lord had said.

## Second reading: Mark 10:17-31

17 As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, ‘Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?’18Jesus said to him, ‘Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. 19You know the commandments: “You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; You shall not defraud; Honour your father and mother.” ’ 20He said to him, ‘Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth.’ 21Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, ‘You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money\* to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.’ 22When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

23 Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, ‘How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!’ 24And the disciples were perplexed at these words. But Jesus said to them again, ‘Children, how hard it is\* to enter the kingdom of God! 25It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.’ 26They were greatly astounded and said to one another,\* ‘Then who can be saved?’ 27Jesus looked at them and said, ‘For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible.’

28 Peter began to say to him, ‘Look, we have left everything and followed you.’ 29Jesus said, ‘Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields, for my sake and for the sake of the good news,\* 30who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age—houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, and fields, with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. 31But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.’

**Friday, April 3**

**Psalm 22**

## First reading: Exodus 9:13-35

13 Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Rise up early in the morning and present yourself before Pharaoh, and say to him, “Thus says the Lord, the God of the Hebrews: Let my people go, so that they may worship me. 14For this time I will send all my plagues upon you yourself, and upon your officials, and upon your people, so that you may know that there is no one like me in all the earth. 15For by now I could have stretched out my hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth. 16But this is why I have let you live: to show you my power, and to make my name resound through all the earth. 17You are still exalting yourself against my people, and will not let them go.18Tomorrow at this time I will cause the heaviest hail to fall that has ever fallen in Egypt from the day it was founded until now. 19Send, therefore, and have your livestock and everything that you have in the open field brought to a secure place; every human or animal that is in the open field and is not brought under shelter will die when the hail comes down upon them.” ’ 20Those officials of Pharaoh who feared the word of the Lordhurried their slaves and livestock off to a secure place. 21Those who did not regard the word of the Lord left their slaves and livestock in the open field.

22 The Lord said to Moses, ‘Stretch out your hand towards heaven so that hail may fall on the whole land of Egypt, on humans and animals and all the plants of the field in the land of Egypt.’ 23Then Moses stretched out his staff towards heaven, and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and fire came down on the earth. And the Lord rained hail on the land of Egypt;24there was hail with fire flashing continually in the midst of it, such heavy hail as had never fallen in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. 25The hail struck down everything that was in the open field throughout all the land of Egypt, both human and animal; the hail also struck down all the plants of the field, and shattered every tree in the field. 26Only in the land of Goshen, where the Israelites were, there was no hail.

27 Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron, and said to them, ‘This time I have sinned; the Lord is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong. 28Pray to the Lord! Enough of God’s thunder and hail! I will let you go; you need stay no longer.’ 29Moses said to him, ‘As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will stretch out my hands to the Lord; the thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail, so that you may know that the earth is the Lord’s. 30But as for you and your officials, I know that you do not yet fear the Lord God.’ 31(Now the flax and the barley were ruined, for the barley was in the ear and the flax was in bud. 32But the wheat and the spelt were not ruined, for they are late in coming up.) 33So Moses left Pharaoh, went out of the city, and stretched out his hands to the Lord; then the thunder and the hail ceased, and the rain no longer poured down on the earth. 34But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had ceased, he sinned once more and hardened his heart, he and his officials. 35So the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he would not let the Israelites go, just as the Lord had spoken through Moses.

## Second reading: Mark 10:32-45

32 They were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them; they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them what was to happen to him, 33saying, ‘See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death; then they will hand him over to the Gentiles; 34they will mock him, and spit upon him, and flog him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise again.’

35 James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said to him, ‘Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.’ 36And he said to them, ‘What is it you want me to do for you?’ 37And they said to him, ‘Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.’ 38But Jesus said to them, ‘You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?’ 39They replied, ‘We are able.’ Then Jesus said to them, ‘The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; 40but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.’

41 When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. 42So Jesus called them and said to them, ‘You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. 43But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, 44and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. 45For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.’