**Readings for Morning Prayer, Week of June 1**

**Monday, June 1:**

**Psalm 41, 52**

## First Reading: Ecclesiastes 2:1-15

I said to myself, ‘Come now, I will make a test of pleasure; enjoy yourself.’ But again, this also was vanity. 2I said of laughter, ‘It is mad’, and of pleasure, ‘What use is it?’ 3I searched with my mind how to cheer my body with wine—my mind still guiding me with wisdom—and how to lay hold on folly, until I might see what was good for mortals to do under heaven during the few days of their life. 4I made great works; I built houses and planted vineyards for myself; 5I made myself gardens and parks, and planted in them all kinds of fruit trees. 6I made myself pools from which to water the forest of growing trees. 7I bought male and female slaves, and had slaves who were born in my house; I also had great possessions of herds and flocks, more than any who had been before me in Jerusalem. 8I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the treasure of kings and of the provinces; I got singers, both men and women, and delights of the flesh, and many concubines.\*

9 So I became great and surpassed all who were before me in Jerusalem; also my wisdom remained with me. 10Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them; I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil. 11Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had spent in doing it, and again, all was vanity and a chasing after wind,\* and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.

12 So I turned to consider wisdom and madness and folly; for what can the one do who comes after the king? Only what has already been done.13Then I saw that wisdom excels folly as light excels darkness.
14 The wise have eyes in their head,
   but fools walk in darkness.

Yet I perceived that the same fate befalls all of them. 15Then I said to myself, ‘What happens to the fool will happen to me also; why then have I been so very wise?’ And I said to myself that this also is vanity.

## Second Reading: Matthew 13:44-52

44 ‘The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

45 ‘Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; 46on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

47 ‘Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; 48when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. 49So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous 50and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

51 ‘Have you understood all this?’ They answered, ‘Yes.’ 52And he said to them, ‘Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.’

**Tuesday, June 2:**

**Psalm 45**

## First Reading: Ecclesiastes 2:16-26

16For there is no enduring remembrance of the wise or of fools, seeing that in the days to come all will have been long forgotten. How can the wise die just like fools? 17So I hated life, because what is done under the sun was grievous to me; for all is vanity and a chasing after wind.\*

18 I hated all my toil in which I had toiled under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to those who come after me 19—and who knows whether they will be wise or foolish? Yet they will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. 20So I turned and gave my heart up to despair concerning all the toil of my labours under the sun, 21because sometimes one who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave all to be enjoyed by another who did not toil for it. This also is vanity and a great evil. 22What do mortals get from all the toil and strain with which they toil under the sun? 23For all their days are full of pain, and their work is a vexation; even at night their minds do not rest. This also is vanity.

24 There is nothing better for mortals than to eat and drink, and find enjoyment in their toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God; 25for apart from him\* who can eat or who can have enjoyment? 26For to the one who pleases him God gives wisdom and knowledge and joy; but to the sinner he gives the work of gathering and heaping, only to give to one who pleases God. This also is vanity and a chasing after wind.\*

## Second Reading: Matthew 13:53-58

53When Jesus had finished these parables, he left that place.

54 He came to his home town and began to teach the people\* in their synagogue, so that they were astounded and said, ‘Where did this man get this wisdom and these deeds of power? 55Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all this?’ 57And they took offence at him. But Jesus said to them, ‘Prophets are not without honour except in their own country and in their own house.’ 58And he did not do many deeds of power there, because of their unbelief.

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**Wednesday, June 3:**

**Psalm 119:49-72**

## First reading: Ecclesiastes 3:1-15

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:
2 a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
3 a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
4 a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
5 a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
6 a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;
7 a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
8 a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.

9 What gain have the workers from their toil? 10I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. 11He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover, he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. 12I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; 13moreover, it is God’s gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil. 14I know that whatever God does endures for ever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it; God has done this, so that all should stand in awe before him. 15That which is, already has been; that which is to be, already is; and God seeks out what has gone by.\*

## Second reading: Matthew 14:1-12

At that time Herod the ruler\* heard reports about Jesus; 2and he said to his servants, ‘This is John the Baptist; he has been raised from the dead, and for this reason these powers are at work in him.’ 3For Herod had arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife,\* 4because John had been telling him, ‘It is not lawful for you to have her.’ 5Though Herod\* wanted to put him to death, he feared the crowd, because they regarded him as a prophet.6But when Herod’s birthday came, the daughter of Herodias danced before the company, and she pleased Herod 7so much that he promised on oath to grant her whatever she might ask. 8Prompted by her mother, she said, ‘Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a platter.’ 9The king was grieved, yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he commanded it to be given; 10he sent and had John beheaded in the prison. 11The head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, who brought it to her mother. 12His disciples came and took the body and buried it; then they went and told Jesus.

**Thursday, June 4**

**Psalm 50**

## First reading: Ecclesiastes 3:16-4:3

16 Moreover, I saw under the sun that in the place of justice, wickedness was there, and in the place of righteousness, wickedness was there as well. 17I said in my heart, God will judge the righteous and the wicked, for he has appointed a time for every matter, and for every work. 18I said in my heart with regard to human beings that God is testing them to show that they are but animals. 19For the fate of humans and the fate of animals is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and humans have no advantage over the animals; for all is vanity. 20All go to one place; all are from the dust, and all turn to dust again. 21Who knows whether the human spirit goes upwards and the spirit of animals goes downwards to the earth? 22So I saw that there is nothing better than that all should enjoy their work, for that is their lot; who can bring them to see what will be after them?

4Again I saw all the oppressions that are practised under the sun. Look, the tears of the oppressed—with no one to comfort them! On the side of their oppressors there was power—with no one to comfort them. 2And I thought the dead, who have already died, more fortunate than the living, who are still alive; 3but better than both is the one who has not yet been, and has not seen the evil deeds that are done under the sun.

## Second reading: Matthew 14:13-21

13 Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. 14When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. 15When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, ‘This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves.’ 16Jesus said to them, ‘They need not go away; you give them something to eat.’ 17They replied, ‘We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish.’ 18And he said, ‘Bring them here to me.’ 19Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. 20And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full.21And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

**Friday, June 5**

**Psalm 40 and 54**

## First reading: Ecclesiastes 5:1-7

5\*Guard your steps when you go to the house of God; to draw near to listen is better than the sacrifice offered by fools; for they do not know how to keep from doing evil.\* 2\*Never be rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be quick to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven, and you upon earth; therefore let your words be few.

3 For dreams come with many cares, and a fool’s voice with many words.

4 When you make a vow to God, do not delay fulfilling it; for he has no pleasure in fools. Fulfil what you vow. 5It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not fulfil it. 6Do not let your mouth lead you into sin, and do not say before the messenger that it was a mistake; why should God be angry at your words, and destroy the work of your hands?

7 With many dreams come vanities and a multitude of words;\* but fear God.

## Second reading: Matthew 14:22-36

22 Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. 23And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, 24but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land,\* for the wind was against them.25And early in the morning he came walking towards them on the lake.26But when the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified, saying, ‘It is a ghost!’ And they cried out in fear. 27But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, ‘Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.’

28 Peter answered him, ‘Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.’ 29He said, ‘Come.’ So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came towards Jesus. 30But when he noticed the strong wind,\* he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, ‘Lord, save me!’ 31Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, ‘You of little faith, why did you doubt?’ 32When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. 33And those in the boat worshipped him, saying, ‘Truly you are the Son of God.’

34 When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret. 35After the people of that place recognized him, they sent word throughout the region and brought all who were sick to him, 36and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.