

## EIGHTH SUNDAY

# Season of the Year B

*First Reading † Hosea 2:16-17.21-22*

*I will betroth you to me for ever.*

### **A reading from the prophet Hosea**

Thus says the Lord:

Therefore look, I am going to seduce her  
and lead her into the desert and speak to her heart.

There I shall give her back her vineyards  
and make the Vale of Achor a gateway of hope.

There she will respond as she did when she was young,  
as on the day when she came up from the land of Egypt.

I shall betroth you to myself for ever,  
I shall betroth you in righteousness and justice,  
in faithful love and tenderness.

I shall betroth you to myself in loyalty and in the knowledge of the Lord.

The word of the Lord.

*Responsorial † Psalm 102:1-4.8.10.12-13*

### ***The Lord is kind and merciful.***

Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
and all within me, his holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
and never forget all his gifts.

### ***The Lord is kind and merciful.***

It is the Lord who forgives all your sins,  
who heals every one of your ills,  
who redeems your life from the pit,  
who crowns you with mercy and compassion,

### ***The Lord is kind and merciful.***

The Lord is compassionate and gracious,  
slow to anger and rich in mercy.  
He does not treat us according to our sins,  
nor repay us according to our faults.

### ***The Lord is kind and merciful.***

As far as the east is from the west,  
so far does he remove our sins from us.  
As a father has compassion on his children,  
the Lord's compassion is on those who fear him.

### ***The Lord is kind and merciful.***

***Second Reading † 2 Corinthians 3:1-6***

*You are a letter from Christ for us to deliver.*

**A reading from the second letter of St Paul to the Corinthians**

Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Surely we do not need, as some do, letters of commendation to you or from you! You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts for all to see and acknowledge, demonstrating that you are a letter of Christ served by ourselves and written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God; not on tablets of stone but on the tablets of human hearts.

Such is the confidence we have towards God through Christ. Not that we are competent to make any claims for ourselves; our competence comes from God, who has given us the competence to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit, for the letter kills but the Spirit gives life.

The word of the Lord.

***Gospel Acclamation † James 1:18***

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

The Father gave us birth by his message of truth,  
that we might be as the first fruits of his creation.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

***Gospel † Mark 2:18-22***

*The bridegroom is still with them.*

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark**

John's disciples and the Pharisees were keeping a fast, when some people came to Jesus and said to him,

'Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not?'

Jesus replied,

'Surely the bridegroom's attendants cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them?  
As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.

But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them,  
and then, on that day, they will fast.

'No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth onto an old cloak;  
otherwise, the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and there is a worse tear.

And nobody puts new wine into old wineskins;  
otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost and the skins too.

No! New wine into fresh skins!

The Gospel of the Lord.

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