

Collect: O God, the strength of all those who put their trust in you, mercifully accept our prayers and, because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without you, grant us the help of your grace, that in the keeping of your commandments we may please you both in will and deed; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Deuteronomy 5.12–15

¹² The LORD says this: Observe the sabbath day and keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. ¹³ For six days you shall labour and do all your work. ¹⁴ But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work – you, or your son or your daughter, or your male or female slave, or your ox or your donkey, or any of your livestock, or the resident alien in your towns, so that your male and female slave may rest as well as you. ¹⁵ Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, the LORD your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the sabbath day.

2 Corinthians 4.5–12

⁵ We do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. ⁶ For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. ⁷ But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. ⁸ We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven

to despair; ⁹ persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; ¹⁰ always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies. ¹¹ For while we live, we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be made visible in our mortal flesh. ¹² So death is at work in us, but life in you.

Mark 2.23 – 3.6

²³ One sabbath Jesus was going through the cornfields; and as they made their way his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. ²⁴ The Pharisees said to him, 'Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the sabbath?' ²⁵ And he said to them, 'Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need of food? ²⁶ He entered the house of God, when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and he gave some to his companions.' ²⁷ Then he said to them, 'The sabbath was made for humankind and not humankind for the sabbath; ²⁸ so the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath.'

¹ Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there who had a withered hand. ² They watched him to see whether he would cure him on the sabbath, so that they might accuse him. ³ And he said to the man who had the withered hand, 'Come forward.' ⁴ Then he said to the Pharisees, 'Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the sabbath, to save life or to kill?' But they were silent. ⁵ He looked around at them with anger; he was grieved at their hardness of heart and said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. ⁶ The Pharisees went out and

immediately conspired with the Herodians against Jesus.

When the Spirit Comes

*Before the Spirit came,
you were just words on a page,
Black on white and yellowed with age.
Simply a story of long ago,
Of a man who had so much love to show;
Who healed the sick and cured the lame;
Took our guilt and bore our shame.
It sounded so good, but it just couldn't last.
It was not for today but locked in the past.
Until the Spirit came.*

*Now the Spirit has come,
you are here at my side,
Larger than life and ready to guide;
Making real to me all that you said
And doing through me the things that I read.
I am the glove that your hand has filled;
I am the cup into which you have spilled
All the love and the power
which you promised would come,
Right now in the present and for everyone.
Since the Spirit came.
Martyn Payne*

Post Communion: Eternal Father, we thank you for nourishing us with these heavenly gifts: may our communion strengthen us in faith, build us up in hope, and make us grow in love; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.