

Readings: Feria

First Reading: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

You yourselves know, brothers and sisters,
that our reception among you was not without effect.
Rather, after we had suffered and been insolently treated,
as you know, in Philippi,
we drew courage through our God
to speak to you the Gospel of God with much struggle.
Our exhortation was not from delusion or impure motives,
nor did it work through deception.
But as we were judged worthy by God to be entrusted with the Gospel,
that is how we speak,
not as trying to please men,
but rather God, who judges our hearts.
Nor, indeed, did we ever appear with flattering speech, as you know,
or with a pretext for greed—God is witness—
nor did we seek praise from men,
either from you or from others,
although we were able to impose our weight as Apostles of Christ.
Rather, we were gentle among you,
as a nursing mother cares for her children.
With such affection for you, we were determined to share with you
not only the Gospel of God, but our very selves as well,

so dearly beloved had you become to us.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 139:1-3, 4-6

R/ You have searched me and you know me, Lord.

O Lord, you have probed me and you know me;
you know when I sit and when I stand;
you understand my thoughts from afar.
My journeys and my rest you scrutinize,

with all my ways you are familiar.

R/ You have searched me and you know me, Lord.

Even before a word is on my tongue,
behold, O Lord, you know the whole of it.
Behind me and before, you hem me in
and rest your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
too lofty for me to attain.

R/ You have searched me and you know me, Lord.

Introduction to Gospel Reading

There is always the danger that religions turn into a kind of ritualism that imposes practices of little meaning as if they were the saving factors. Ritualism and rubricism is still raising its ugly head even after Vatican II. How ridiculous, almost superstitious! Equally ridiculous because it is empty, is a religion that professes to have faith but minimizes or shuns religious practices. Be sure that with this attitude quite rampant in our time, true faith disappears.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 23:23-26

Jesus said:

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites.
You pay tithes of mint and dill and cummin,
and have neglected the weightier things of the law:
judgment and mercy and fidelity.
But these you should have done, without neglecting the others.
Blind guides, who strain out the gnat and swallow the camel!

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites.
You cleanse the outside of cup and dish,
but inside they are full of plunder and self-indulgence.
Blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup,

so that the outside also may be clean."
