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| **The Lessons Appointed for Use on the** | http://www.lectionarypage.net/Art/Newshield.gif |
| Eighth Sunday after the Epiphany |
| Year B RCL |

Hosea 2:14-20

2 Corinthians 3:1-6

Mark 2:13-22

Psalm 103:1-13, 22

**The Collect**

Most loving Father, whose will it is for us to give thanks for all things, to fear nothing but the loss of you, and to cast all our care on you who care for us: Preserve us from faithless fears and worldly anxieties, that no clouds of this mortal life may hide from us the light of that love which is immortal, and which you have manifested to us in your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.*Amen.*

**Old Testament**

**Hosea 2:14-20**

The Lord said to Hosea:

Therefore, I will now allure her,   
and bring her into the wilderness,   
and speak tenderly to her.

From there I will give her her vineyards,   
and make the Valley of Achor a door of hope.

There she shall respond as in the days of her youth,   
as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt.

On that day, says the Lord, you will call me, “My husband,” and no longer will you call me, “My Baal.” For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they shall be mentioned by name no more. I will make for you a covenant on that day with the wild animals, the birds of the air, and the creeping things of the ground; and I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land; and I will make you lie down in safety. And I will take you for my wife forever; I will take you for my wife in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love, and in mercy. I will take you for my wife in faithfulness; and you shall know the Lord.

**The Psalm**

**Psalm 103:1-13, 22**

***Benedic, anima mea***

1 Bless the Lord, O my soul, \*  
and all that is within me, bless his holy Name.

2 Bless the Lord, O my soul, \*  
and forget not all his benefits.

3 He forgives all your sins \*  
and heals all your infirmities;

4 He redeems your life from the grave \*  
and crowns you with mercy and loving-kindness;

5 He satisfies you with good things, \*  
and your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

6 The Lord executes righteousness \*  
and judgment for all who are oppressed.

7 He made his ways known to Moses \*  
and his works to the children of Israel.

8 The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, \*  
slow to anger and of great kindness.

9 He will not always accuse us, \*  
nor will he keep his anger for ever.

10 He has not dealt with us according to our sins, \*  
nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.

11 For as the heavens are high above the earth, \*  
so is his mercy great upon those who fear him.

12 As far as the east is from the west, \*  
so far has he removed our sins from us.

13 As a father cares for his children, \*  
so does the Lord care for those who fear him.

22 Bless the Lord, all you works of his,  
in all places of his dominion; \*  
bless the Lord, O my soul.

**The Epistle**

**2 Corinthians 3:1-6**

Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Surely we do not need, as some do, letters of recommendation to you or from you, do we? You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, to be known and read by all; and you show that you are a letter of Christ, prepared by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. Not that we are competent of ourselves to claim anything as coming from us; our competence is from God, who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of letter but of spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

**The Gospel**

**Mark 2:13-22**

Jesus went out again beside the sea; the whole crowd gathered around him, and he taught them. As he was walking along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he got up and followed him.

And as he sat at dinner in Levi’s house, many tax collectors and sinners were also sitting with Jesus and his disciples—for there were many who followed him. When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, they said to his disciples, “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?” When Jesus heard this, he said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.”

Now John’s disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and people came and said to him, “Why do John’s disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?” Jesus said to them, “The wedding guests cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them, can they? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast on that day.

“No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak; otherwise, the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear is made. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and so are the skins; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins.”

Optional parts of the readings are set off in square brackets.

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