**FIRST  READING 2 Corinthians 5.20b – 6.10**

A reading from the second letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin,  
so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

As we work together with him,  
we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain.

For the Lord says,  
‘At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you.’ See, now is the acceptable time;  
see, now is the day of salvation!

We are putting no obstacle in anyone’s way,  
so that no fault may be found with our ministry,

but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities,

beatings, imprisonments, riots, labours, sleepless nights, hunger;

by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit,

 genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God;  
with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left;

in honour and dishonour, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true;

as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see – we are alive;  
as punished, and yet not killed;

as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

This is the Word of the Lord.