

Sunday, March 4, 2012
Second Sunday in Lent
Holy Communion

Worship Assistants

FIRST READING: Genesis 17:1–7, 15–16

A reading from _____.

As with Noah, God makes an everlasting covenant with Abraham and Sarah. God promises this old couple that they will be the ancestors of nations, though they have no child together. God will miraculously bring forth new life from Sarah's old womb. The name changes emphasize the firmness of God's promise.

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. ²And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." ³Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴"As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. ¹⁵God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 22:23–31

Refrain: All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD. (Ps. 22:27)

²³You who fear the LORD, give praise! All you of Jacob's ¹line, give glory.

Stand in awe of the LORD, all you off- ¹spring of Israel.

**²⁴For the LORD does not despise nor abhor the poor in their poverty;
neither is the LORD's face ¹hidden from them;
but when they cry out, ¹the LORD hears them.**

²⁵From you comes my praise in the ¹great assembly;

I will perform my vows in the sight of those who ¹fear the LORD.

**²⁶The poor shall eat ¹and be satisfied,
Let those who seek the LORD give praise!**

May your hearts | live forever! R

²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn | to the LORD;
all the families of nations shall bow | before God.

**²⁸For dominion belongs | to the LORD,
who rules o- | ver the nations.**

²⁹Indeed, all who sleep in the earth shall bow | down in worship;
all who go down to the dust, though they be dead,
shall kneel be- | fore the LORD.

**³⁰Their descendants shall | serve the LORD,
whom they shall proclaim to genera- | tions to come.**

³¹They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people | yet unborn,
saying to them, "The | LORD has acted!" R

SECOND READING: Romans 4:13–25

A reading from _____.

Paul presents Abraham as the example for how a person comes into a right relationship with God not through works of the law but through faith. Though Abraham and Sarah were far too old for bearing children, Abraham trusted that God would accomplish what God had promised to accomplish.

¹³For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations") — in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "So numerous shall your descendants be." ¹⁹He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. ²⁰No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²²Therefore his faith "was reckoned to him as righteousness." ²³Now the words, "it was reckoned to him," were written not for his sake alone, ²⁴but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Mark 8:31–38

The holy gospel according to _____.

Glory to you, O Lord.

After Peter confesses his belief that Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus tells his disciples for the first time what is to come. Peter's response indicates that he does not yet understand the way of the cross that Jesus will travel.

³¹Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

³²He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

³⁴He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

We cry to you for help, O God, praying for the church, the world, and all those who are in need.

Let us pray for the one holy catholic and apostolic church, for the church's leaders and all its people, and for every local community of faith. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Let us pray for this planet we call home; for the oceans we have polluted with oil; for the land we have piled with garbage; and for the species we have endangered. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Let us pray for the multitude of nations (*especially*); for Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and others of different faiths than our own; and for those without a community of faith. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Let us pray for couples longing for children; for families that are separated; for children in foster care; for people with disabilities; and for all in need of healing (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Let us pray for this assembly; for those who read the lessons and lead music; for greeters and ushers; for Sunday school teachers and students; for longtime members and first-time visitors. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Let us give thanks for those who have lost their lives for the sake of the gospel (*especially*). Encourage us also to deny ourselves, take up the cross, and follow you. Lord in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Now is the acceptable time to offer our prayers to you, God of grace and truth. Receive them in your mercy, and grant us all that we need, in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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