

The First Reading

Jeremiah 31:27-34

The First Reading is from Jeremiah, chapter 31

²⁷ The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of humans and the seed of animals. ²⁸ And just as I have watched over them to pluck up and break down, to overthrow, destroy, and bring evil, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, says the Lord. ²⁹ In those days they shall no longer say:

“The parents have eaten sour grapes,
and the children’s teeth are set on edge.”

³⁰ But all shall die for their own sins; the teeth of everyone who eats sour grapes shall be set on edge.

³¹ The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, ³³ says the Lord. ³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the Lord,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills— from where will my help come?

² My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

³ He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.

⁴ He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

⁵ The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade at your right hand.

⁶ The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.

⁷ The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.

⁸ The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in
from this time on and forevermore.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Hebrews 10:1-10

The Second Reading is from Hebrews the 10th chapter

10 Since the law has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the true form of these realities, it^[a] can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered year after year, make perfect those who approach. ² Otherwise, would they not have ceased being offered, since the worshipers, cleansed once for all, would no longer have any consciousness of sin? ³ But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sin year after year. ⁴ For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. ⁵ Consequently, when Christ^[b] came into the world, he said,

“Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,
but a body you have prepared for me;

⁶ in burnt offerings and sin offerings
you have taken no pleasure.

⁷ Then I said, ‘See, God, I have come to do your will, O God’
(in the scroll of the book^[c] it is written of me).”

⁸ When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), ⁹ then he added, “See, I have come to do your will.” He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. ¹⁰ And it is by God’s will^[d] that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Gospel of Matthew 27:24-56

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 27th chapter. Glory to you O Lord.

²⁴ So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man’s blood;^[a] see to it yourselves.” ²⁵ Then the people as a whole answered, “His blood be on us and on our children!” ²⁶ So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

²⁷ Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor’s headquarters,^[b] and they gathered the whole cohort around him. ²⁸ They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, ²⁹ and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” ³⁰ They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. ³¹ After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

³² As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. ³³ And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), ³⁴ they

offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. ³⁵ And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots;^[c] ³⁶ then they sat down there and kept watch over him. ³⁷ Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

³⁸ Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁹ Those who passed by derided^[d] him, shaking their heads ⁴⁰ and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." ⁴¹ In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, ⁴² "He saved others; he cannot save himself.^[e] He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. ⁴³ He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, 'I am God's Son.'" ⁴⁴ The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

⁴⁵ From noon on, darkness came over the whole land^[f] until three in the afternoon. ⁴⁶ And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" ⁴⁷ When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." ⁴⁸ At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. ⁴⁹ But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him."^[g] ⁵⁰ Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last.^[h] ⁵¹ At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. ⁵² The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. ⁵³ After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. ⁵⁴ Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"^[i]

⁵⁵ Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee and had provided for him. ⁵⁶ Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

The Gospel of our Lord. Praise to you O Christ.

Prayers of Intercession

O heavenly Father, as we gather once more in your sanctuary, hear our prayers that we lift up to you as we unite our hearts and cry out for the needs of our community and world.

Brief silence for reflection

Heavenly Father, you renew the face of the earth with vigor and a love that knows no boundary. Renew us in the covenant you made with all creation, that we may uphold our end of the bargain and care for the land and waters and air with as much vigor as you have. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

God, you are beyond our reach, and yet you hear our cries for help and reach down to us. May we hear the cries for help from our neighbors, and be so empowered to reach out to them until all are fed and have economic justice. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Lord of all love, you watched in pain as your own Son was beaten and nailed to the cross. In his brokenness we receive the ultimate healing. Grant your healing to all who are battling illness or disease. Wipe away our tears from this pandemic and open the way for the healing balm to be shared by all. We especially lift up to your care: Bradley, Josie, Bev, Nancy, Elizabeth, John, Linda, Dave, Jim, Cassie, Delores, Graham, Jim, Bob, Ila, Tucker, Marjorie, Norman, Carmen, Barbara, and Evelyn. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

King of peace, your sacrifice broke the power of sin and gives us hope that we can bridge all that divides us. Give national leaders the wisdom to build that bridge to everlasting peace. We ask you to be with those who serve in the military, especially Sgt. Lacey Elliott; allow them to serve with honor and return home safely. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Jesus, in your death, you were hailed as God's Son, who died and entered the tomb to break the power of death and open the way to everlasting life. May we be inspired by the faith of the saints who have gone before us, and may that faith give us all hope until the day we join with them in rising out of our tombs alongside of you. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

It is with grateful hearts that we lift all concerns, those named and those only the Spirit is able to lift for us, to you. We turn all these over to your care and yearn for your merciful answer, through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Savior. Amen