

THE WORD OF THE LORD : TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

At the Liturgy at Nine Thirty THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

With the texts for the second Sunday in Lent, the church turns to consider human faith and divine faithfulness, God's promises and human responses. The first and second reading are linked directly by the figure of Abraham. The first is the account of God's call and promise to the patriarch and Abraham's faithful response. In Romans 4, Paul lifts up Abraham as one whose faith "was reckoned...as righteousness" and stresses that the promise came through grace and not the law. The responsorial psalm celebrates the faithfulness of God, who does not sleep but is the helper who watches over the faithful.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Presider: Almighty God, whose Son was revealed in majesty before he suffered death upon the cross, give us faith to perceive his glory, that being strengthened by his grace we may be changed into his likeness, from glory to glory; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

People: Amen.

COLLECT OF LENT

Presider Almighty and everlasting God, you despise nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our brokenness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

People: Amen.

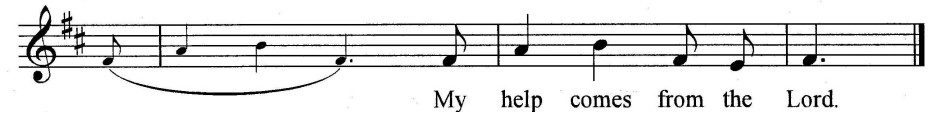
FIRST READING: Genesis 12.1-4a

Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him.

The word of the Lord

R/. Thanks be to God

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: 121



I lift up my eyes to the hills; from where is my help to come? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth. *R/.*

He will not let your foot be moved and he who watches over you will not fall asleep. Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. *R/.*

The Lord himself watches over you; the Lord is your shade at your right hand, so that the sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. *R/.*

The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; it is he who shall keep you safe. The Lord shall watch over your going out and your coming in, from this time forth for evermore. *R/.*

SECOND READING : Romans 4.1-5, 13-17

What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness?" Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness. For 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. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. For 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, as 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.

The word of the Lord
R/. Thanks be to God

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: John 3.14-15

Praise to you, Lord, king of eternal glory. The Son of man must be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. Praise to you, Lord, king of eternal glory.

GOSPEL: John 3.1-17

R/. Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.' Jesus answered him, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?' Jesus answered, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, "You must be born from above." The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can these things be?' Jesus answered him, 'Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? 'Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven,

the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. 'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. 'Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

The Gospel of Christ
R/. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Presider: God of wisdom, may the light of the eternal Word, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, guide us to your glory. We ask this in his name.

People: Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Presider: Creator of heaven and earth, we thank you for these holy mysteries, which bring us now a share in the life to come, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

People: Amen.