

A wooden cross is leaning against a stone wall. The wall is made of large, irregular stones in shades of tan and grey. To the right, a portion of a blue door is visible. The cross is made of dark wood and is positioned diagonally across the frame. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

THOSE
WHO
LOSE
THEIR
LIFE FOR
MY SAKE
WILL
SAVE IT

MARK 8:35

TRINITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
2340 State Street, East Petersburg, PA 17520
717-569-1632

Website: www.trinityeastpete.org E-Mail: secretary@trinityeastpete.org

The Rev. Dr. Christopher M. Rankin, Pastor

The Rev. Harry G. Royer, Pastor Emeritus

The Rev. Dr. Carolyn Call, Covenanted Minister of Mission

Mr. Michael Slechta, Director of Music/ Sounds of Trinity Choir Director

Dr. Robert Adams, Interim Organist

Mrs. Carmen Richards, Pianist

Mrs. Carol Kratz, Administrative Assistant

Mrs. Amy Hummer, Interim Preschool Director

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT
7:45 A.M. SERVICE

Today's Theme: The second covenant in this year's Lenten readings is the one made with Abraham and Sarah: God's promise to make them the ancestors of many, with whom God will remain in everlasting covenant. Paul says this promise comes to all who share Abraham's faith in the God who brings life into being where there was no life. We receive this baptismal promise of resurrection life in faith. Sarah and Abraham receive new names as a sign of the covenant, and we too get new identities in baptism, as we put on Christ.

Welcome all visitors! We welcome all who worship with us. May the joy of Christ's presence and the power of the Holy Spirit fill you with peace and hope! We are honored by your presence and trust that you will join us in the praise and worship of God. Please sign our guest book in the narthex. If you are interested in church membership, please give your name and telephone number to Pastor Rankin.

Welcome to the Eucharist! All who seek to follow Jesus and who seek the gifts Jesus offers us are invited to share in this sacrament of Holy Communion.

Children are invited to receive communion at the discretion of their parents/guardians. If a child wants to receive a blessing, they are asked to fold their hands.

Prayer As You Enter: *O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life. Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

Why no alleluias or hymn of praise during Lent? You may have noticed that the act of praise following the assurance of forgiveness is missing from our worship. We join other churches in omitting alleluias, glorias, and other hymns of praise as we turn again to our Lenten journey of exile and repentance. We long for the eschatological New Jerusalem "...the Jerusalem above; she is free, and she is our mother" (Galatians 4:26). We walk in darkness awaiting the city of God where... "there will be no more night; the servants of God need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever" (Revelation 22:5). Until then, we travel with our Lord Jesus into the desert to face the devil, we join him in his triumphant procession into Jerusalem, we pray with him in the garden of Gethsemane, and we follow him to the painful cross and to the cold dark tomb. We trust that our journey with Christ does not end there. On Easter we once again join the praises of the choirs of heaven: "The Lord is risen; the Kingdom has come; our joy is complete; and, in concert with the angels and saints, we greet the risen Lord with shouts of 'Alleluia!'" (http://catholicism.about.com/od/worship/f/No_Alleluia.htm).

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

CALL TO WORSHIP

AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM AND INVITATION TO THE TABLE

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

We are invited to walk with God. We are welcomed by God as people of the covenant.

How awesome to stand in the presence of our Creator! We bring our praise to glorify God.

God calls us by name and gives us new names. We are summoned to faithfulness and fruitfulness.

God not only speaks to us but also listens. God hears our cries and meets our needs.

Let the ends of the earth remember and turn to God. Let the families of all nations worship the Creator.

We will pay our vows to the One who calls us. We praise the God of all nations and all people.

Bread for the journey. A feast for hungry hearts. Come and taste the goodness of God!

CONFESSION OF SINS

CALL TO CONFESSION

During the season of Lent we are called to return to the Lord with all our heart.

Let us confess our sin and seek reconciliation with God and neighbor.

(SEATED OR KNEELING)

SILENT CONFESSION OF SINS

CONFESSION OF SIN

Held in God's mercy, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Holy God, we confess that we are caught in snares of sin and cannot break free. We hoard resources while our neighbors are hungry and cold. We speak in ways that silence others. We are silent when we should speak up. We keep score in our hearts. We let the hurts grow into hatred. For all these things and for sins only you know, forgive us, Lord. Amen.

KYRIE

Lord, have mercy.	Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.	Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.	Lord, have mercy.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

COLLECT FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

Let us pray the collect together.

In your wonderful works, O God, we rejoice. In your promises we have hope. By your grace we receive new life, even as we deny ourselves, take up Christ's cross, and follow. Our hearts rejoice, as your word instructs us anew; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(PLEASE BE SEATED)

THE WORD OF GOD

THE FIRST LESSON

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

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 womb. The name changes emphasize the firmness of God's promise.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God!

THE PSALTER

Psalm 22:23-31

You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him; stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!

For he did not despise or abhor the affliction of the afflicted; he did not hide his face from me but heard when I cried to him.

From you comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will pay before those who fear him.

The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the Lord. May your hearts live forever!

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before him.

For dominion belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations.

To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, and I shall live for him.

Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying that he has done it.

THE SECOND LESSON

Romans 4:13-25

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.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

THE HOLY GOSPEL

St. Mark 8:31-38

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.

Glory be to You, O Lord.

THE GOSPEL OF OUR LORD

Praise be to You, O Christ.

(PLEASE BE SEATED)

SERMON

“Remember the Promise”

Pastor Rankin

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became fully human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, and has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PEOPLE'S OFFERING

OFFERING DEDICATION

Glorious God, we dedicate these gifts as an expression of our faith. You alone know how much we share and how much we withhold. You know the extent of our trust and the depth of our commitment. May this act of giving draw us closer to you and extend a blessing to all who are helped through our sharing; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord!

Let us give thanks to God Most High.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

We give you thanks, Holy One, almighty and eternal God, always and everywhere, through Jesus Christ, the only one begotten by you before all time, by whom you made the world and all things. We bless you for your continual love and care for every creature. We praise you for forming us in your image and for calling us to be your people. Although we rebelled against your love, you did not abandon us in our sin, but sent to us prophets and teachers to lead us into the way of salvation. In the fullness of time you came to us and received our nature in the person of Jesus, who, in obedience, by suffering on the cross, and being raised from the dead, delivered us from the way of sin and death. We praise you that Jesus now reigns with you and the Holy Spirit in glory and ever lives to pray for us. We thank you for the Holy Spirit who leads us into truth, defends us in adversity, and gathers us from every people to unite us in one holy church. Therefore, with your sons and daughters of faith in all places and times, we praise your holy name: **Holy, holy, holy God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God, Most High. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!**

(PLEASE BE SEATED)

WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

THE PRAYER OF OUR LORD

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

BREAKING OF THE HOST & POURING OF THE CUP

As this grain was once scattered in the fields, and has come together in one bread, so we, with different needs and hopes, come together as one, for we share one bread.

The Bread of Life, broken for us.

The cup which we share is the cup of the New Covenant written in our hearts and witnessed by Jesus.

The Cup of Blessing, poured out for us and for the many.

AGNUS DEI

Jesus, Lamb of God: have mercy on us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins: have mercy on us.

Jesus, redeemer of the world: give us your peace. Amen.

*(Those who wish to come forward will be invited by the pastor. The pastor will serve you the host, saying, "The Body of Christ." You reply, "Amen!" The assistant will present you with the cup, saying, "The Blood of Christ." You reply, "Amen!" Grape juice is in the chalice with the cross and wine is in the other chalice. If you need the pastor and assistant to come to you, please indicate that to someone near you or the pastor. If you do not wish to come forward, you are invited to use the packaged elements at the back of the sanctuary and commune in your pew. The pastor will offer a blessing everyone has communed. **Children are invited to receive communion at the discretion of their parents/guardians. If a child wants to receive a blessing, they are asked to fold their hands.**)*

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

POST COMMUNION PRAYERS

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of all creation, and a world in need.

We turn to you for purpose, holy God. Remind us of your faithfulness to this congregation. Increase our trust in your guidance and keep us near the cross. Grant that our acts of service will express Christ's sacrificial love. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We turn to you for meaning. Nurture in your children the gifts of the Spirit poured out in baptism and let the mind of Christ guide the church. Give wisdom and discernment to our pastors, elders, deacons, teachers, and leaders. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We turn to you for justice. Uphold the worth and dignity of every person, especially any who experience hatred and rejection. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We turn to you for renewal. Save lives and ecosystems threatened by pollution and a changing climate. Cleanse the earth's waters and restore the soil. Preserve rainforests, deserts, and wildlife, that generations to come may cherish your creation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We turn to you for healing. Send compassionate helpers to any who suffer because of war and violence. Shelter unhoused people, befriend those who are lonely, bring hope to any in despair, and console the bereaved. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

SILENT PRAYER

Let us pray together.

Generous God, at this table we have tasted your immeasurable grace. As grains of wheat are gathered into one bread, no make us one loaf to free the world; in the name of Jesus, the Bread of life. Amen.

CLOSE OF WORSHIP

BENEDICTION

★ **CATCH THE VISION & SHARE THE JOY** ★

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chancel Flowers are given by **Harry & Brenda Himelwright** in honor of Gary Himelwright's birthday.

The Worship Aids are given by **Ken & Phyllis Zimmerman** to express their thanks and appreciation to their church family for the cards and expressions of sympathy upon the death of Phyllis' brother and Ken's sister. **THANK YOU!**

Ministering Today

Pastor	Rev. Dr. Christopher Rankin
Lector	Rev. Sandy Morris
Money Counters	Ron & Donna Denlinger, Steve Shenk, Bob Bistline
Altar Guild	Charlene Cristy, Anita Rohrer
Building Trustee	Mike Wagner
Koinonia	Paula Dennes
Ministries	Card Carol Kratz (Church Staff)
	Called to Care Anne Rankin
	Visitation Anita Rohrer

Happy Birthday

Today – Judie Bistline

Friday – Holly Connor, Heather DuBois

Saturday – Diane Arey, Michael McDonough

Attendance for Sun., Feb. 18	7:45–8	10:30–89	TOTAL – 97
Sunday School	21		
Lenten Service	27		

This Week at Trinity Church

(Church Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m.-2 p.m.)

Monday 7:00 PM – Choir/8:15 PM Bells

Wednesday 7:00 PM – Lenten Service

Thursday 6:00 PM – Parish Life

7:00 PM – Preschool Board

Saturday 7-4 - Lifeline

7:00 PM – Alanon/8:00 PM - AA

Sunday 7:45 AM – Eucharist

9:00 AM – Sunday School

10:00 AM - Koinonia

10:30 AM – Eucharist

PRAYERS FOR GOD'S HEALING PRESENCE

MEMBERS

Ken & Phyllis Zimmerman

Hedwig Hunsicker

George & Ellie Latsha

Denise Huggins

Jodi Keller

Rev. Ken Trauger

Don & Pat Miller

Nancy Patton

Dr. Janet Harriger

The Lehman family

Joann Peck

Harry Himelwright

Donna Wolf & Family

Mary Lou Shaab

Scott & Jane Owens

Stan & Pat Seachrist

Donna Zirkel

Carmen & Jerry Richards

Rev. Dave & Mid Gockley

Sam Minder III

Lainie Christensen

Rev. Bob & Nancy Musser

Hank Fox

Pastor Harry Royer

Betty Tyndall and family

Mary Witmer

Bob & Marlyn Wible

Rev. Bob & Judie Bistline

Erika Otthofer

Kathleen Sensenig Adams

Rev. Jere & Judy Chapman

Ron Becker

Danielle Huggins Holbein

Joann & Dawn Garvin

The Fischer Family

Dr. Blaine Connor

Leo Daly

Shelly Family

Michael McDonough

FAMILY & FRIENDS

The family of Janice Zimmerman (sister of Ken Zimmerman)
Norma Mallard (friend of Gail Kogut)
Tom Chapman (brother of Rev. Jere Chapman)
Annette Stork (niece of Pat Sensenig)
Logan Davis (husband of Hillary Bossert-Davis)
Brian & Liz Culp (son and daughter-in-law of Rev. Jere & Judy Chapman)
Jean Weglarz (neighbor of Rev. Bob & Judie Bistline)
Dan Doughton (Family friend of John and Sarah Paulukow)
Melby Bush (friend of Joan Sensenig)
Harvey & Dianne Sick (friends of Judy Chapman)
Aaron Flickinger (nephew of Pat & Joan Sensenig)
Deb Olley Heagy (daughter of Jack & Karen Olley)
The Haverstick Family (friends of Mike & Shelley Wagner)
Tom Riley (friend of Bud McCarty)
Rev. Loy Garber (former seminarian)
Roland Anderson and family (friends of John & Kayla Brennan)
Jaden Allen (nephew of Carol Kratz)
Gina McCarty (daughter-in-law of Bud & Kathy McCarty)
The Bruno family (friends of Blaine Connor)
Jessica Brown (niece of Mike & Shelley Wagner)
John Martin (brother-in-law of Dolly & John Barr)
Kelly Quick (friend of Rev. Dr. Rich & Lainie Christensen)
Marianne Gibble (friend of Trinity)
James Malone & family
Tom & Elaine Lichtenwalner (parents of Mike Lichtenwalner)
Janet Owens (sister-in-law of Scott & Jane Owens)
Chad Zirkel (son of Donna Zirkel)
Jordan Sensenig (grandson of Pat & Joan Sensenig),
Don Pfeifer (husband of Denise Pfeifer)
Jake & Jean Otthofer (parents of Dan Otthofer)
The Martin family
Robert Richards (brother of Jerry Richards)
Ronald Himelwright (grandson of Brenda & Harry Himelwright)
Barry Richards(son of Jerry & Carmen Richards)
Tyler Miller (grandson of Iris DeMaio)
Joan Kalbach (mother of Dr. Cathy Hoshauer)
Jim & Kathy Long (friends of Jerry & Carmen Richards)
John Siebern (Bob Siever's brother-in-law)
Jo Jo Richards & family (Carmen & Jerry's granddaughter-in-law)

HOLY LAMENT: MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICES

This series explores various kinds of lament found in scripture. Each week we will consider what it means to sit with our grief rather than try to push it aside. We will discover that many faithful believers have wrestled with grief, sorrow, and questions for God about why the innocent suffer. This series understands lament as one of the more faithful things we can do. When we approach God with honesty and humility, and we admit that some things are too big for our hearts to bear, we will find there not a disapproving God but one who weeps with us. We will find a God who can take our grief and disappointment and transform them into holy joy and renewed hope. We will learn, ultimately, that Jesus' death on the cross---the place to which the season of Lent leads us---is the reason we never mourn as those without hope.

Join us each Wednesday during Lent at 7 p.m. as some of our clergy members or religious teachers in our midst preach. Below is the list of our themes and preachers:

February 28: "Little" Laments—Dr. Randall Zachman preaching

March 6: Laments from the Depths—Rev. Dr. Rich Christensen preaching

March 13: Individual Lament—Rev. Bob Bistline preaching

March 20: Communal Lament—Rev. Ken Trauger preaching

Information about Holy Week & Easter services will be in the March Parish Post

LENTEN SERVICE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: We are in need of ushers and greeters for our Wednesday Lenten services. If you are able to help, please contact Pastor Chris or Carol Kratz.

THE MARCH PARISH POST is available in the information racks on both floors of the church building.

DEVOTIONALS: The January-March edition of These Days are available on the table across from the church office or on the lower level by the portico entrance. **Lenten devotionals are available on the table across from the church office.**

EASTER FLOWER ORDER FORMS are available on the table across from the church office. **The deadline is TODAY!!!**

KOINONIA/SUNDAYMORNING FELLOWSHIP: We have resumed koinonia (community fellowship) every Sunday at 10 a.m. in Isenberg Hall. Volunteers are asked to provide light refreshments and drinks/coffee. The sign-up sheet is on the kitchen coordinator. If you have any questions, contact Paula Dennes. **Coffee is always available between 7:45 service and Sunday School.**

2024 CHANCEL FLOWERS AND WORSHIP AID SPONSORS: Upcoming dates for worship aids are: **March 3, 10, 17 & 24.** Upcoming dates for Chancel Flowers are **March 3, 17, & 24.** The price for flowers is \$60. The price for worship aids is \$26. Look for the charts on the bulletin board in the narthex or call Carol in the church office.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES

1. **The Wired Word Class** discusses how current events intersect with our faith. Diane Rice leads this class in the choir room.
2. **The Adult/Youth Class** meets in Isenberg Hall with Sue Bowman and Pastor Rankin leading the class. On February 18, this class began a new study, *Discovering the Psalms: Passion, Promise, & Praise.*
3. **The children** meet in the classroom on the lower level. Various teachers lead this lectionary-based class. **We need more teachers....speak to Sue Bowman, Bob Kilgore, or Pastor Chris & Anne Rankin.**

LIFE LINE SCREENING, the nation's leading provider of preventive health screenings, will offer affordable, non-invasive and painless health screenings at Trinity United Church of Christ on **Saturday, March 2, 2024.** A package of four screenings to identify risk for stroke, heart disease and other chronic conditions will be offered: **Carotid Artery Screening (Plaque), Peripheral Arterial Disease Screening Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA), Atrial Fibrillation.**

These 4 vital screenings take 60-90 minutes to complete. Register by calling toll free 1-844-591-7160, text the word "circle" to 216-279-1607 or online at <https://llsa.social/>

EXPLORING THE SKY ABOVE TRINITY U.C.C. WITH SUE BOWMAN

(Sue is a member of Trinity and a retired Astronomy teacher)

Calling all stargazers and those interested in enjoying a celestial evening out! Bring your telescopes and binoculars and join in the fun as the Trinity Preschool families and the members of Trinity explore **The Sky Above Trinity U.C.C.** This observation session will train the telescope at Jupiter and its moons, Earth's moon as well as deep sky clusters and nebulae. The Trinity Youth will be assisting with the setup and use of the equipment and may be found to be quite conversant on matters astronomical! Great chance to use the star chart provided or look ahead with one of these apps: *Star Chart, NASA app, Night Sky, Sky View Free, Star Walk2, Sky Safari.* You may wish to bring along lawn chairs. Until then, keep looking up!



Look for the sign-up sheet across from the church office

March 14th

6-7 pm Pizza

7 pm Brief Intro to the observation session

7:15 pm Observation begins

Save the Dates: Be sure to mark these dates on your calendars.



Lancaster Stormers Game (formerly Barnstormers)

May 31, 2024

The cost is \$35 (ticket, suite rental, endless buffet for 90 minutes, gratuity). Children from ages 4-18 will be covered by our Youth Ministry account and those under 4 are free. You can sign-up by contacting Carol in the church office. We will need a \$15 deposit when you sign-up! Playing Charleston Dirty Birds.

Friendship Fest----July 14, 2024 – 4-7 PM

Food Trucks, Games, Fun Activities, Auscultation Brass Concert (5-6PM)

Proceeds from the Friendship Fest will support the Trinity Preschool!

Save The Dates



VBS 2024

Trinity UCC, 2340 State St., East Petersburg

www.trinityeastpete.org

717-569-1632

July 15 - 18 6:30-8:30 PM

July 19 6:30 PM Closing Program

Caretaker And Me Class - Under Five With Caretaker
Children's Classes - Five Through Finished Sixth Grade
Youth Volunteers - Contact Mrs. Slechta

Through stories, crafts, games, and music, ***“Reach For The Stars”*** reminds us that things that seem impossible to us, are possible with God.

Rev. Esbenshade will facilitate the teen/adult class. Studying the book, ***“Tradition In Crisis”*** by Peter Schmiechen, the class will examine how “Now is the time to reclaim the church based on the grace and community of Christ.”

Mission Project - Habitat For Humanity

FIRST READING: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

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."

Psalms 22:23-31**SECOND READING: Romans 4:13-25**

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.

GOSPEL: Mark 8:31-38

[Jesus] 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."

Next Sunday's Readings: Exodus 20:1-17; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25; John 2:13-22.

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