

FIRST READING

Nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ.

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans

8:31, 38-39

Brothers and sisters:

What can we say about all this?
If God is on our side, can anyone be against us?

I am sure that nothing can separate us from God's love –
not life or death, not angels or spirits,
not the present or the future,
and not the powers above or powers below.

Nothing in all creation can separate us from God's love for us
in Christ Jesus our Lord!

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

103:1-2, 8 and 11

R. (8a) The Lord is kind and merciful.

With all my heart
I praise the Lord,
and with all that I am
I praise his holy name!
With all my heart
I praise the Lord!
I will never forget
how kind he has been.

R. The Lord is kind and merciful.

The Lord is merciful!
He is kind and patient,
and his love never fails.
How great is God's love for all
who worship him?
Greater than the distance
between heaven and earth!

R. The Lord is kind and merciful.

VERSE BEFORE THE GOSPEL

See Matthew 17:5

R. Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

From the shining cloud the Father's voice is heard:
This is my beloved Son, hear him.

R. Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

GOSPEL

This is my beloved Son.

† A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark 9:2-10

Jesus took Peter, James, and John with him and went up on a high mountain, where they could be alone.

There in front of the disciples,
Jesus was completely changed.
And his clothes became much whiter
than any bleach on earth could make them.
Then Moses and Elijah were there talking with Jesus.

Peter said to Jesus, "Teacher, it is good for us to be here! Let us make three shelters, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." But Peter and the others were terribly frightened, and he did not know what he was talking about.

The shadow of a cloud passed over and covered them.
From the cloud a voice said, "This is my Son, and I love him.
Listen to what he says!"
At once the disciples looked around,
but they saw only Jesus.

As Jesus and his disciples were coming down the mountain, he told them not to say a word about what they had seen, until the Son of Man had been raised from death.

So they kept it to themselves. But they wondered what he meant by the words "raised from death."

The gospel of the Lord.

Second Sunday of Lent — Cycle B

Prayer: Dear Jesus, we are trying to be extra good during this Lent. We know you are helping us. Thank you for being our God and giving us your Son, Jesus, as a friend and brother. AMEN.

Readings: Gen. 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18; Ps 116:10, 15-19; Rom 8:31b-34; Mk 9:2-10

Last week we heard a piece of the story of Noah. We didn't talk much about the COVENANT—promise/agreement—God made to Noah, his descendants and all living creatures. But, remember, Noah built the Ark and took on board the living creatures of the earth. After 40 days and nights of rain, the flooded earth gives way to new life.

We did talk about, from the Gospel, how Jesus was put to the test. This Sunday, we learn of another test: Abraham is tested to offer his only Son as a sacrifice. Some times we get confused about why a loving God would ask Abraham to sacrifice his only son, Isaac. But we forget: That's what all the tribes thought the gods wanted. By obeying what he understood to be what his God wanted, Abraham, hears God say clearly: "Do not lay your hand on the boy" and "Do not do the least thing to him." Abraham learns, that by making the choice to do what God asked, allowing himself to be tested, led to even greater things. Because Abraham was willing to do what God had asked, God promises—makes a Covenant—to give Abraham a huge number of descendants and give them huge blessings! This is good news!!

The Gospel is the story of Jesus taking Peter, James and John up the mountain and being completely changed—transfigured. Then, it seems Moses and Elijah appear. Feeling 'terrified,' Peter wants to make the event permanent. Suddenly, God speaks: "This is my Beloved, Son. Listen to him. "And then, Jesus is alone; they come down the mountain; Jesus tells them not to tell anyone until He has risen from the dead. "What's this all about?" Peter, James and John wonder to themselves. It is a mystery. Following Jesus is filled with MYSTERY. In the mystery of Jesus' life is the perfect balance of rules and dreams. Moses represents the Law and Elijah the Prophet, dreams for the best of what believers have come to value.

Activities:

In your Lenten Booklet, turn to page 2. Write the word, PROMISE. Talk about how promises are a form of covenant. Covenant means: This is a very serious, holy, matter. It means two sides agree to certain behaviors or rules. Our parents and god-parents made a promise at our baptism to raise us as Catholic Christians. What are some 'agreements' that follow from our baptism? Knowing we are baptized is different than acting accordingly. We have choices to comply with the 'agreement' or not. List how being a Christian means we have to make different choices? To be kind and forgiving; to forgive and not judge others; to tell the truth and live with the consequences; to share and care for those who don't have what we have. Write or draw in the booklet: Something the child can promise to do this week to show s/he is a follower of Jesus. Help the children understand they have choices regarding their behavior and the rules they follow as part of their Baptismal Covenant.

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Then write the word, BLESSING. Tell stories about the blessings that have come to you, your family or friends, because you believed in each other, you trusted each other, i.e. Winning a sports game, special gifts, good health, surprise trips or visits. Point out what a blessing it is to know you did the right thing, the good deed, to feel good about being you. This is the best blessing of following Jesus. How much better can it get!!?? Have the children share how they felt when they did the right, the good thing? How do they know they are loved?

When we bless something, we mark it as a holy, special, object or person. An object or person that helps us remember God is with us. On page 2, draw a picture (or write the words) of your special blessings.

Finally, have the children form a circle for prayer. Recall that last week they blessed each other with the sign of the cross. In this Sunday's Transfiguration story Jesus hears God say: This is My Beloved Son." Either hold hands and pray for special blessings we need or have received—good parents, teachers, friends, health, home, etc; Or mark each other's forehead with the sign of the cross and say: Remember, you are God's child and you are loved.