

Fourth Sunday in Lent

The Sunday Collect:

Gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world: Evermore give us this bread, that he may live in us, and we in him; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

First Lesson: 2 Chronicles 36:14-23

All the officers of the priests and the people likewise were exceedingly unfaithful, following all the abominations of the nations. And they polluted the house of the LORD that he had made holy in Jerusalem.

The LORD, the God of their fathers, sent persistently to them by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place. But they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words and scoffing at his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD rose against his people, until there was no remedy.

Therefore he brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans, who killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary and had no compassion on young man or virgin, old man or aged. He gave them all into his hand. And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king and of his princes, all these he brought to Babylon.

And they burned the house of God and broke down the wall of Jerusalem and burned all its palaces with fire and destroyed all its precious vessels. He took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia, to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its Sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.

Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing:

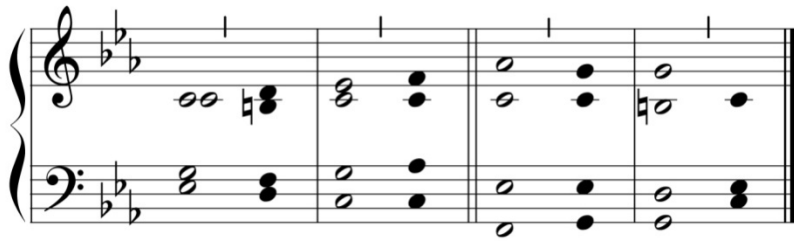
“Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, “The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all his people, may the LORD his God be with him. Let him go up.”

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 122 (Song of Ascents)

Robert Knox Kennedy (b. 1945)



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- 1 I was glad when they said unto / me, |
“We will go into the house of the / Lord.” ||
- 2 Now our feet are / standing |
within your gates, O Je / rusalem. ††
- 3 Jerusalem is built as a / city |
that is at unity in it / self. ||
- 4 For there the tribes go up, even the tribes of the / Lord, |
as was decreed for Israel, to give thanks unto the Name of the / Lord. ††
- 5 For there is the throne of / judgment, |
even the throne of the house of / David. ||
- 6 O pray for the peace of Je / rusalem |
they shall prosper that / love you. ††
- 7 Peace be within your / walls |
and plenteousness within your / palaces. ||
- 8 For my brethren and companions’ / sakes, |
I will wish you pros / perity. ††
- 9 Indeed, because of the house of the Lord our / God, |
I will seek to do you / good. ||
- (1) I was glad when they said unto / me, |
“We will go into the house of the / Lord.” ††

Glory be to the Father, and to the / Son |
And to the Holy / Spirit †
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever / shall be, |
World without end, A / men. ††

Second Lesson: Ephesians 2:1-10

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience — among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ — by grace you have been saved — and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Deacon: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People: Glory to You, Lord Christ.

The Gospel: John 6:1-15

After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias.

And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick. Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?" He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little." One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?" Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number. Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted. And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost." So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten. When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, "This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!"

Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

Deacon: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ