

FIRST READING: 2 Samuel 18:5-9,15,31-33 The death of David's son Absalom
(NIRV)

⁵The king [David] gave an order to Joab, Abishai and Ittai. He commanded them, "Be gentle with the young man Absalom. Do it for me." All the troops heard the king give the commanders that order about Absalom. ⁶David's army marched out of the city to fight against Israel. The battle took place in the forest of Ephraim. ⁷There David's men won the battle over Israel's army. A huge number of men were wounded or killed that day. The total number was 20,000. ⁸The fighting spread out over the whole countryside. But more men were killed in the forest that day than out in the open. ⁹Absalom happened to come across some of David's men. He was riding his mule. The mule went under the thick branches of a large oak tree. Absalom's hair got caught in the tree. He was left hanging in the air. The mule he was riding kept on going. ¹⁵Ten of the men carrying Joab's armour surrounded Absalom. They struck him and killed him. ³¹Then the man from Cush arrived. He said, "You are my king and master. I'm bringing you some good news. The LORD has shown that you are in the right. He has done this by rescuing you today from all those trying to kill you." ³²The king asked the man from Cush, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" The man replied, "King David, may your enemies be like that young man. May all those who rise up to harm you be like him." ³³The king was very upset. He went up to the room over the entrance of the gate and wept. As he went, he said, "My son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! I wish I had died instead of you. Absalom! My son, my son!"

PSALM: Psalm 130 (ESV)

¹Out of the depths I cry to You, O LORD! ²O Lord, hear my voice! Let Your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleas for mercy! ³If You, O LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? ⁴But with You there is forgiveness, that You may be feared. ⁵I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in His word I hope; ⁶my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning, more than watchmen for the morning. ⁷O Israel, hope in the LORD! For with the LORD there is steadfast love, and with Him is plentiful redemption. ⁸And He will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

SECOND READING: Ephesians 4:25 - 5:2 Be imitators of God (NIV)

²⁵ Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbour, for we are all members of one body. ²⁶ 'In your anger do not sin': do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷ and do not give the devil a foothold. ²⁸ Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need. ²⁹ Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. ³² Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. ¹ Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children ² and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

GOSPEL: John 6:35,41-51 Jesus the bread of life (CEB)

³⁵ Jesus replied, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to Me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in Me will never be thirsty. ⁴¹ The Jewish opposition grumbled about Him because He said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." ⁴² They asked, "Isn't this Jesus, Joseph's son, whose mother and father we know? How can He now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?" ⁴³ Jesus responded, "Don't grumble among yourselves. ⁴⁴ No one can come to Me unless they are drawn to Me by the Father who sent Me, and I will raise them up at the last day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the Prophets, And they *will all be taught by God*. Everyone who has listened to the Father and learned from Him comes to Me. ⁴⁶ No one has seen the Father except the One who is from God. He has seen the Father. ⁴⁷ I assure you, whoever believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸ I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ Your ancestors ate manna in the wilderness and they died. ⁵⁰ This is the bread that comes down from heaven so that whoever eats from it will never die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever, and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is My flesh."