

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, 25 JUNE 2023

FIRST READING: Genesis 21:8-21 God's promise to Hagar and Ishmael

⁸The child grew and was weaned, and on the day Isaac was weaned Abraham held a great feast. ⁹But Sarah saw that the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham was mocking, ¹⁰and she said to Abraham, "Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for that woman's son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac." ¹¹The matter distressed Abraham greatly because it concerned his son. ¹²But God said to him, "Do not be so distressed about the boy and your slave woman. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring^[a] will be reckoned. ¹³I will make the son of the slave into a nation also, because he is your offspring." ¹⁴Early the next morning Abraham took some food and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar. He set them on her shoulders and then sent her off with the boy. She went on her way and wandered in the Desert of Beersheba. ¹⁵When the water in the skin was gone, she put the boy under one of the bushes. ¹⁶Then she went off and sat down about a bowshot away, for she thought, "I cannot watch the boy die." And as she sat there, she^[b] began to sob. ¹⁷God heard the boy crying, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, "What is the matter, Hagar? Do not be afraid; God has heard the boy crying as he lies there. ¹⁸Lift the boy up and take him by the hand, for I will make him into a great nation." ¹⁹Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. So she went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink. ²⁰God was with the boy as he grew up. He lived in the desert and became an archer. ²¹While he was living in the Desert of Paran, his mother got a wife for him from Egypt.

PSALM 86:1-10,16,17

¹Hear me, LORD, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. ²Guard my life, for I am faithful to you; save your servant who trusts in you. You are my God; ³have mercy on me, Lord, for I call to you all day long. ⁴Bring joy to your servant, Lord, for I put my trust in you. ⁵You, Lord, are forgiving and good, abounding in love to all who call to you. ⁶Hear my prayer, LORD; listen to my cry for mercy. ⁷When I am in distress, I call to you, because you answer me. ⁸Among the gods there is none like you, Lord; no deeds can compare with yours. ⁹All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, Lord; they will bring glory to your name. ¹⁰For you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God. ¹⁶Turn to me and have mercy on me; show your strength in behalf of your servant; save me, because I serve you just as my mother did. ¹⁷Give me a sign of your goodness, that my enemies may see it and be put to shame, for you, Lord, have helped me and comforted me.

SECOND READING: Romans 6:1b-11 Dead to sin, but alive to Christ

6 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ² By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? ³ Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. ⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with,^[a] that we should no longer be slaves to sin— ⁷ because anyone who has died has been set free from sin. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. ¹⁰ The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹ In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

GOSPEL: Matthew 10:24-39 Do not be afraid; take up your cross and follow Christ

²⁴ "The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master. ²⁵ It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household! ²⁶ "So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. ²⁷ What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. ²⁸ Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care.^[a] ³⁰ And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹ So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. ³² "Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. ³³ But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven. ³⁴ "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵ For I have come to turn "a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law— ³⁶ a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.'^[b] ³⁷ "Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. ³⁸ Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.