

## Readings for Sunday, March 14, 2021

*The Fourth Sunday of Lent*

### First Reading: 2 Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23

In those days, all the princes of Judah, the priests, and the people added infidelity to infidelity, practicing all the abominations of the nations and polluting the LORD's temple which he had consecrated in Jerusalem.

Early and often did the LORD, the God of their fathers, send his messengers to them, for he had compassion on his people and his dwelling place. But they mocked the messengers of God, despised his warnings, and scoffed at his prophets, until the anger of the LORD against his people was so inflamed that there was no remedy. Their enemies burnt the house of God, tore down the walls of Jerusalem, set all its palaces afire, and destroyed all its precious objects. Those who escaped the sword were carried captive to Babylon, where they became servants of the king of the Chaldeans and his sons until the kingdom of the Persians came to power. All this was to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah: *"Until the land has retrieved its lost sabbaths, during all the time it lies waste it shall have rest while seventy years are fulfilled."*

In the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah, the LORD inspired King Cyrus of Persia to issue this proclamation throughout his kingdom, both by word of mouth and in writing: *"Thus says Cyrus, king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD, the God of heaven, has given to me, and he has also charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever, therefore, among you belongs to any part of his people, let him go up, and may his God be with him!"*

### Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 137:1-2, 3, 4-5, 6

**R. Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!**

By the streams of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion.  
On the aspens of that land we hung up our harps.

**R. Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!**

For there our captors asked of us the lyrics of our songs,  
And our despoilers urged us to be joyous: "Sing for us the songs of Zion!"

**R. Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!**

How could we sing a song of the LORD in a foreign land?  
If I forget you, Jerusalem, may my right hand be forgotten!

**R. Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!**

May my tongue cleave to my palate if I remember you not,  
If I place not Jerusalem ahead of my joy.

**R. Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!**

### Second Reading: Ephesians 2:4-10

Brothers and sisters: God, who is rich in mercy, because of the great love he had for us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, brought us to life with Christ — by grace you have been saved —, raised us up with him, and seated us with him in the heavens in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God; it is not from works, so no one may boast. For we are his handiwork, created in Christ Jesus for the good works that God has prepared in advance, that we should live in them.

### Gospel Acclamation: John 3:16

**R: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory!**

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,  
so that everyone who believes in him might have eternal life.

**R: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory!**

### Gospel: John 3:14-21

Jesus said to Nicodemus: *"Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life."*

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the verdict, that the light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light, because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come toward the light, so that his works might not be exposed. But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.

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*(Confiteor and Apostle's Creed on reverse)*

### **Penitential Act (Confiteor)**

I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters,  
that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words,  
in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,

*[Pray while striking the breast three times.]*

through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault;  
therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints,  
and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.  
Amen.

### **Apostles' Creed**

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again.  
He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.  
Amen.

### **Prayers to the Immaculate Heart of Mary for Protection from the Coronavirus**

O Immaculate Heart of Mary, we entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick.  
At the foot of the Cross, you participated in Jesus' pain, with steadfast faith.  
Patroness of the Diocese of Jefferson City, you know what we need.  
We are certain of the power of your intercession, so that,  
as you did at Cana of Galilee, joy and feasting might return after this moment of trial.  
Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform ourselves to the Father's will  
and to do what Jesus tells us: He who taught us to "love one another, as I have loved you"  
took our sufferings upon Himself and bore our sorrows  
to bring us, through the Cross, to the joy of the Resurrection.  
Bring under your mantle of protection all who provide care for the sick and  
minister to their needs, as your Son implores us to do for one another.

**V.** We seek refuge under your protection, O Holy Mother of God.

**R.** Do not despise our pleas and deliver us from every danger,  
O glorious and blessed Virgin. Amen.