

## WEEK 2

### SUNDAY

#### CYCLE 1

**First Reading.** *Rm. 4:1-25*

*Abraham justified by means of the faith.*

What then shall we say about Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." Now to one who works, his wages are not reckoned as a gift but as his due. And to one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness. So also David pronounces a blessing upon the man to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works: "Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not reckon his sin."

Is this blessing pronounced only upon the circumcised, or also upon the uncircumcised? We say that faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness. How then was it reckoned to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. He received circumcision as a sign or seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised and who thus have righteousness reckoned to them, and likewise the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but also follow the example of the faith which our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

The promise to Abraham and his descendants, that they should inherit the world, did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression. That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants -- not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham, for he is

the father of us all, as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations" -- in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations; as he had been told, "So shall your descendants be." He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead because he was about a hundred years old, or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. That is why his faith was "reckoned to him as righteousness." But the words, "it was reckoned to him," were written not for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him that raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

**Responsorial.** *Heb. 11: 17, 19; Rm. 4: 17*

**R:** Through faith Abraham, put to the test, offered Isaac, and precisely he who had received the promises offered his unique son; \* he thought in fact that God was capable of resurrecting the dead.

**V:** He believed in him who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not as yet exist;

**R:** he thought in fact that God was capable of resurrecting the dead.

**Second Reading.** *Bk. 4, 7*

*Abraham believed in that which was to happen,  
We believe in that which has happened.*

**From the "Commentary on the Letter to the Romans" of Origen, presbyter.**

"Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness" (Rm. 4: 3). Moses certainly did not write for Abraham, who was already dead for some time, but for us, so that from the reading we could draw profit for our faith, convinced that if we also believe in God as he believed, the faith will be credited as righteousness also "to us, who believe in he who has raised Jesus, our Lord from the dead" (Rm. 4: 24). Let us see for

what reason, confronting us with the faith of Abraham, Paul speaks of the resurrection.

Could Abraham have believed in he who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead, if Jesus had not yet risen? I would like to see therefore what Paul intended when he promised us that, as to Abraham who had faith the faith was credited as righteousness, so also will it be credited “to us who believe in he who has raised Jesus Christ our Lord from the dead”.

Abraham when he was ordered to offer his unique son in sacrifice, believed that God had also the power to resurrect him from the dead, he believed moreover that the thing did not concern only Isaac, but that the full realization of the mystery was reserved to the seed of him who is Jesus Christ. For which with joy he was already ready to offer his unique son, because in this he saw not the extinction of his descendants, but the salvation of the world and the renewal of the entire human race, ransomed by the resurrection of the Lord. and therefore he said of him: “Abraham, your father, rejoiced in the hope of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad” (Jn. 8: 36). In this way therefore the comparison between the faith of Abraham and that of those who believe in he who resurrected our Lord Jesus appears pertinent, because Abraham believed in that which was to happen, we in that which has happened.

**Responsorial.** *Rm. 4: 20 – 21, 18*

**R:** Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, \* fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.

**V:** He had faith hoping against all hope and thus he became the father of many nations,

**R:** fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.

## CYCLE 2

**First Reading.** *Gen. 9:1-17*

*The pact of God with Noah and his descendants.*

And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every bird of the air, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea; into your hand they are delivered. Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you; and as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. Only you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. For your lifeblood I will surely require a reckoning; of every beast I will require it and of man; of every man's brother I will require the life of man.

Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for God made man in his own image. And you, be fruitful and multiply, bring forth abundantly on the earth and multiply in it."

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, "Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth."

And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will look upon it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth."

God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth."

**Responsorial.** *Cfr. Is. 54: 9, 10*

**R:** As in the days of Noah I swore that I would never pour out again the waters over the earth, so also now I swear that I will not be angry with you anymore, \* nor will my covenant of peace waver.

**V:** Even if the mountains were to move and the hills were to be shaken, I will never take away my affection from you,  
**R:** nor will my covenant of peace waver.

**Second Reading.** *Let. 1, n. 1*

*Grace and peace to you from the Almighty God.*

**From the “Letter to the Corinthians” of St. Clement 1, pope and martyr.**

The Church of God which sojourns at Rome, to the Church of God sojourning at Corinth, to them that are called and sanctified by the will of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace, from Almighty God through Jesus Christ, be multiplied upon you.

Owing, dear brethren, to the sudden and successive calamitous events which have happened to ourselves, we feel that we have been somewhat tardy in turning our attention to the points respecting which you consulted us; and especially to that shameful and detestable sedition, utterly abhorrent to the elect of God, which a few rash and self-confident persons have kindled to such a pitch of frenzy, that your venerable and illustrious name, worthy to be universally loved, has suffered grievous injury. For who ever dwelt even for a short time among you, and did not find your faith to be as fruitful of virtue as it was firmly established? Who did not admire the sobriety and moderation of your godliness in Christ? Who did not proclaim the magnificence of your habitual hospitality? And who did not rejoice over your perfect and well-grounded knowledge of God?

For you did all things without respect of persons, and walked in the commandments of God, being obedient to those who had the rule over you, and giving all fitting honour to the presbyters among you. You enjoined young men to be of a sober and serious mind; you instructed your wives to do all things with a blameless, becoming, and pure conscience, loving their husbands as in duty bound; and you taught them that, living in the rule of obedience, they should manage their household affairs becomingly, and be in every respect marked by discretion.

**Responsorial.** *Cfr. Jer. 6: 16; 7: 3*

**R:** Stop in the streets and see where the good road is and take it \* thus you will find peace for your souls.

**V:** The Lord says: Improve your conduct and your actions and I will live with you:

**R:** thus you will find peace for your souls.

YEAR A

**Gospel. Jn. 1: 29-34**

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, for he was before me.' I myself did not know him; but for this I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel."

And John bore witness, "I saw the Spirit descend as a dove from heaven, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him; but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

**Third Reading. Book 2**

*The Lamb, the immaculate victim, is led to death for us.*

**From the "Commentary on the Gospel of John" of St. Cyril of Alexandria, bishop.**

We must explain who is the one who is drawing near and for what reason he has descended from heaven in the midst of us. "Behold", exclaims the evangelist, "the Lamb of God" which the prophet Isaiah foretold to us saying: "Like a lamb led to the slaughter, like a sheep dumb in front of its shearers" (Is. 53: 7). Once he prefigured the Law of Moses. But then he saved in part, he did not pour out his mercy over all: he was a type and figure; now instead that Lamb, one time prefigured symbolically, is led as an immaculate victim to be killed for all, that is to take away the sin of the world, to destroy the one who had brought ruin on the earth, to destroy death dying for all, ransoming in this way men from the curse and

making that “dust you are and in dust you will return” (Jn. 3: 19) finally cease. He wanted to become that second Adam, not of earth but from heaven (cfr. 1 Cor. 15: 47), in order to be the cause of every good of the human nature: saviour from the ruin, mediator of the eternal life, the reason of the return to God, origin of piety and of justice, way to the kingdom of heaven.

Only one lamb has died for all, saving the whole human flock in order to take it back to the Father, one for all, in order to subjugate all to God: one for all in order to save all. “So that those who live do not live anymore for themselves, but for him who has died and risen for them” (2 Cor. 5: 15).

We were immersed in many sins and therefore subject to death and to corruption, for this the Father gave his Son for our redemption, one for all, because all the things are in him and he is above all.

He alone has died for all, so that all of us can live in him. The death that had swallowed up the Lamb which was killed for us, restored all in him and with him. All in fact were in Christ. Who for us and in our place died, but he has also risen. Now, sin having been destroyed, who could prevent that the death also, its consequence, would be destroyed? The root having dried up how could the germ conserve itself? Sin being dead, what cause of death remained for us? In fact, with regard to the killing of the Lamb of God, we say with solemn exultation: “Where is, O death, your victory? Where is, O death, your sting?” (1 Cor. 15: 55). “They see the just and they rejoice – the psalmist sings – and every iniquitous man closes his mouth” (Ps. 106: 42), who could accuse anymore those who sin because of fragility, because “God justifies” (Rm. 8: 33): “Christ has ransomed us from the curse of the law, becoming he himself a curse for us” (Ps. 3: 13) so that we could flee from the curse of sin.

**Responsorial.** *Ex. 12: 5, 6, 13; 1 Pet. 1: 18, 19*

**R:** Let your lamb be without defect; the whole assembly of Israel will immolate it at dusk. \* The blood on your houses will be the sign: there will not be the plague of the extermination for you.

**V:** You were freed with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

**R:** The blood on your houses will be the sign: there will not be the plague of extermination for you.

YEAR B

**Gospel.** *Jn. 1: 35-42*

The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples; and he looked at Jesus as he walked, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. Jesus turned, and saw them following, and said to them, "What do you seek?" And they said to him, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?" He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he was staying; and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.

One of the two who heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which means Christ). He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him, and said, "So you are Simon the son of John? You shall be called Cephas" (which means Peter).

**Third Reading.** *Disc. 18: 41-43*

*He who searches for Christ searches also for his sufferings and does not flee from suffering.*

**From the "Commentary on Psalm 118" of St. Ambrose, bishop.**

Wisdom says: "The scoffer searches for wisdom, but in vain" (Pr. 14: 6); not because the Lord does not want to let himself be found by men (he who offered himself to all, even to those who do not search for him); but because he is looked for by the scoffer with such actions that make him unworthy of finding him. For the rest, Simeon who waited for him with an upright heart, found him.

Andrew found him and said to Simon: "We have found the Messiah" (Jn. 1: 41). Philip also said to Nathaniel: "We have found the one of whom Moses wrote in the law and the prophets, Jesus, son of Joseph of Nazareth" (Jn. 1: 45). And to show him that he had truly found the Christ, he added: "Come and see" (Jn. 1: 46). Therefore he who searches for the Christ comes, not with earthly steps, but with the disposition of the soul: he tries to



see him not with the eyes, but with the internal gaze. The Eternal in fact cannot be seen with the eyes of the body, since “the visible things are of a moment, the invisible are eternal” (2 Cor. 4: 18).

The Christ therefore is not in time, but is generated by the Father before time; in as much as he is God, true Son of God, and in as much as he is eternal perfection, he is outside time, and no limit of time circumscribes him; in as much as he is life, he is above time and as such will never be reached by the day of death.

“The death he died, he died to sin once and for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God” (Rm. 6: 10). Do you understand what the Apostle has said? “He died to sin once and for all”. Christ died only once for you sinner: you therefore, after having received baptism, do not sin any more. He died only once for all, and he died only once, not many times for the individuals. You, man, are sin; for this the Almighty Father made his Christ sin; he made him man so that he could carry our sins. For me, therefore, the Lord Jesus died to sin “so that we could become through him justice of God” (2 Cor. 5: 21). For me he died, in order to resurrect me. He died only once, and only once he rose. And you who are dead, buried and resurrected with him through baptism, be careful, after having been dead once, not to die again.

Now you should not die anymore to sin, but to forgiveness: you are risen, do not die a second time, because “Christ risen from the dead does not die anymore, death has no more power over him” (Rm. 6: 9). Then death was subjected to him? Certainly, from the moment that he says “it has no more power over him”, he wants to say that before it had this power over him. Do not waste this gift, O man! For you Christ submitted himself to the power of death, in order to free you from its yoke. He accepted the slavery of death in order to give you the freedom of eternal life.

Therefore he who searches for Christ searches also for his sufferings and does not flee from suffering. “In anguish I cried to the Lord, he answered me and he has pulled me to safety” (Ps. 117: 5). Good therefore is the suffering that makes us worthy of being amply answered by the Lord. To be answered by him is in fact a grace. Therefore he who searches for Christ does not flee from the tribulations, and he who does not flee is found by the Lord. He who welcomes the commandments of God in his heart and with his works does not escape.

**Responsorial.** *1 Pet. 2: 21; Is. 53: 4*

**R:** Christ suffered for you, \* leaving you an example, so that you could follow his footsteps.

**V:** He took on himself our sufferings, he burdened himself with our pains

**R:** leaving you an example, so that you could follow his footsteps.

YEAR C

**Gospel.** *Jn. 2: 1-12*

On the third day there was a marriage at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; Jesus also was invited to the marriage, with his disciples. When the wine failed, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "O woman, what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

Now six stone jars were standing there, for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the steward of the feast." So they took it. When the steward of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward of the feast called the bridegroom and said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first; and when men have drunk freely, then the poor wine; but you have kept the good wine until now." This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

After this he went down to Caper'na-um, with his mother and his brothers and his disciples; and there they stayed for a few days.

**Third Reading.** *Book 2*

*Christ with his presence sanctifies the springs of human generation  
themselves.*

**From the "Commentary on the Gospel of St. John" of St. Cyril of Alexandria, bishop.**

At the opportune moment the Christ began to work miracles, even if the occasion seemed to be furnished by a casual circumstance. In fact they were celebrating a wedding, dignified and honest, and the mother of the Saviour was present; he also was invited and intervened with his disciples, not so much as to participate in the meal, but in so much as he had to accomplish the miracle and infuse in this way a sanctifying current of grace to the sources itself of the human generation which raised up the ordinary level of nature.

It was befitting, in fact, that coming to renew the nature itself of man, in order to bring it back completely to a superior condition, he not only blessed all those who were already born, but prepared also the grace for those who were still to come to light and sanctified the birth. With his presence he honoured the wedding, he who is the joy and the happiness of all, cancelling in this way the sadness that from the beginning had been associated with childbirth. "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed – says St. Paul – the new has come" (2 Cor. 5: 17).

He therefore came to the wedding with his disciples. It was necessary that they were present while he worked miracles, they who let themselves be attracted by the fascination of wonderful facts, since they would gather together that which he was about to operate as food for their faith.

Wine was lacking for the guests and the Mother implored him to act with his usual goodness and benevolence: "They have no more wine" (Jn. 2: 3). She exhorted him to accomplish the miracle, since he had the power to do anything as long as he wanted. "What have I to do with you, O woman? My hour has not yet come" (Jn. 2: 4). Very well does the Lord express himself in this way, since it was not necessary for him to hurry to work miracles or that he was to offer himself to accomplish them: he would accomplish them in order to answer a prayer, and such a grace would have been given in order to be of use rather than to satisfy the curiosity of those present.

Besides this, the things that are desired become more pleasant if they are not granted immediately but are left to be yearned for a bit, enriched in this way by hope. Finally, Christ wanted to show us the great respect that one should show to parents, accepting to

accomplish in homage to his mother that which first he did not want to do.

**Responsorial.** *Is. 43: 19; 2 Cor. 5: 17*

**R:** Behold, I make a new thing \* exactly now it sprouts, do you not notice it?

**V:** If anyone is in Christ he is a new creature; the old things have passed, behold the new has come.

**R:** Exactly now it sprouts, do you not notice it?

# MONDAY

## CYCLE 1

### **First Reading.** *Rm. 5: 1-11*

*The justification of man through Jesus Christ.*

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.

While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Why, one will hardly die for a righteous man -- though perhaps for a good man one will dare even to die. But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we are now justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. Not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received our reconciliation.

### **Responsorial.** *Rm. 5: 8 – 9*

**R:** God showed his love towards us \* because while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

**V:** Since therefore we are now justified by his blood, much more shall he save us from the wrath of God,

**R:** because while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

### **Second Reading.** *Disc. 32:9*

*By means of charity let us detach ourselves from this world  
and fix our home in heaven.*

**From the “Treatise on the Gospel of John” of St. Augustine, bishop.**

But that you may know that the charity of which we are speaking refers to the Holy Spirit (for the question now in hand in the Gospel is concerning the Holy Spirit), hear the apostle when he says, "The charity of God is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us." (Rm. 5: 5).

Why then was it the will of the Lord, seeing that the Spirit's benefits in us are the greatest, because by Him the love of God is poured into our hearts, to give us that Spirit after His resurrection? Why did He want to teach us by this? In order that in our resurrection our love may be inflamed, and that we may detach ourselves from the love of the world to run wholly towards God. For here we are born and die: let us not love this life; let us migrate hence by love; by love let us dwell above, by that love by which we love God.

In this sojourn of our life let us meditate on nothing else, but that here we shall not always be, and that by good living we shall prepare a place for ourselves there, whence we shall never migrate. For our Lord Jesus Christ, after that He is risen again, "now dies no more;" "death," as the apostle says, "shall no more have dominion over Him." (Rm. 6:9)

Behold what we must love. If we live, if we believe in Him who is risen again, He will give us, not that which men love here who love not God, or love the more the less they love Him, but love this the less the more they love Him; but let us see what He has promised us. Not earthly and temporal riches, not honours and power in this world; for you see all these things given to wicked men, that they may not be highly prized by the good.

Not, in short, bodily health itself, though it is He that gives that also, but that, as you see, He gives even to the beasts. Not long life; for what, indeed, is long that will some day have an end? It is not length of days that He has promised to His believers, as if that were a great thing, or decrepit old age, which all wish for before it comes, and all murmur at when it does come. Not beauty of person, which either bodily disease or that same old age that is desired drives away.

One wishes to be beautiful, and also to live to be old: these two desires cannot agree together; if you shall be old, you will not be beautiful; when old age comes, beauty will flee away; the vigour of

beauty and the groaning of old age cannot dwell together in one body.

All these things, then, are not what He promised us when He said, "He that believes in me, let him come and drink, and out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." (Jn. 7: 37-38).

He has promised us eternal life, where we shall have no fear, where we shall not be troubled, whence we shall have no migration, where we shall not die; where there is neither bewailing a predecessor deceased, nor a hoping for a successor. Accordingly, because such is what He has promised to us that love Him, and glow with the charity of the Holy Spirit, therefore He would not give us that same Spirit until He should be glorified, so that He might show in His body the life which we have not now, but which we hope for in the resurrection.

**Responsorial.** *Rm. 7: 6; 5: 5*

**R:** Now we have been freed from the law, having died to that which held us prisoners, \* in order to serve in the new way of the spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

**V:** The love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us,

**R:** in order to serve in the new way of the spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

## CYCLE 2

**First reading.** *Gen. 11:1-26*

*The dispersion of the human race.*

Now the whole earth had one language and few words. And as men migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."

And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the sons of men had built. And the LORD said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is only the beginning of what they will do; and nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down, and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city.

Therefore its name was called Ba'bel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.

These are the descendants of Shem. When Shem was a hundred years old, he became the father of Arpach'shad two years after the flood; and Shem lived after the birth of Arpach'shad five hundred years, and had other sons and daughters.

When Arpach'shad had lived thirty-five years, he became the father of Shelah; and Arpach'shad lived after the birth of Shelah four hundred and three years, and had other sons and daughters.

When Shelah had lived thirty years, he became the father of Eber; and Shelah lived after the birth of Eber four hundred and three years, and had other sons and daughters.

When Eber had lived thirty-four years, he became the father of Peleg; and Eber lived after the birth of Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and had other sons and daughters.

When Peleg had lived thirty years, he became the father of Re'u; and Peleg lived after the birth of Re'u two hundred and nine years, and had other sons and daughters.

When Re'u had lived thirty-two years, he became the father of Serug; and Re'u lived after the birth of Serug two hundred and seven years, and had other sons and daughters.

When Serug had lived thirty years, he became the father of Nahor; and Serug lived after the birth of Nahor two hundred years, and had other sons and daughters.

When Nahor had lived twenty-nine years, he became the father of Terah; and Nahor lived after the birth of Terah a hundred and nineteen years, and had other sons and daughters.



When Terah had lived seventy years, he became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

**Responsorial.** *Cfr. Is. 66: 18; Mk. 13: 27*

**R:** Behold, I come to gather all the nations and all the languages; \* they will come and see my glory.

**V:** Then I will send my angels and I will gather my elect from the four winds;

**R:** they will come and see my glory.

**Second Reading.** *Nm. 2 – 3*

*Day and night worry about the universality of the brothers.*

**From the “Letter to the Corinthians” of St. Clement, pope and martyr.**

Moreover, you were all distinguished by humility, and were in no respect puffed up with pride, but yielded obedience rather than extorted it, and were more willing to give than to receive.

Content with the provision that Christ had made for you, and carefully attending to His words, you were inwardly filled with His doctrine, and His sufferings were before your eyes. Thus a profound and abundant peace was given to you all, and you had an insatiable desire for doing good, while a full outpouring of the Holy Spirit was upon you all. Full of holy designs, you did, with true earnestness of mind and a godly confidence, stretch forth your hands to God Almighty, beseeching Him to be merciful unto you, if you had been guilty of any involuntary transgression.

Day and night you were anxious for the whole brotherhood, that the number of God's elect might be saved through your harmony and your love. You were sincere and uncorrupted, and forgetful of injuries between one another. Every kind of faction and schism was abominable in your sight. You mourned over the transgressions of your neighbours: their deficiencies you deemed your own. You never grudged any act of kindness, being “ready for every good work.” (Tit. 3: 1) Adorned by a thoroughly virtuous and religious life, you did all things in the fear of God. The commandments and ordinances of the Lord were written upon the tablets of your hearts.

Every kind of honour and happiness was bestowed upon you, and then was fulfilled that which is written, "My beloved did eat and drink, and was enlarged and became fat, and kicked." (cfr. Deut. 32: 15)

Hence flowed emulation and envy, strife and sedition, persecution and disorder, war and captivity.

So the worthless rose up against the honoured, those of no reputation against such as were renowned, the foolish against the wise, the young against those advanced in years. (cfr. Is. 3: 5). For this reason righteousness and peace are now far departed from you, inasmuch as every one abandons the fear of God, and has become weakened in His faith, neither walks according to the divine teaching, nor lives in a way that is worthy of Christ, but walks after his own wicked lusts, resuming the practice of an unrighteous and ungodly envy, by which death itself entered into the world.

**Responsorial.** *1 Pet. 1: 22; 3: 8*

**R:** Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, \* love one another deeply with all your hearts.

**V:** Be in harmony, participate in the joys and pains of the others, animated by brotherly affection, be compassionate and humble;

**R:** love one another deeply with all your hearts.

**Gospel.** *Mk. 2:18-22*

Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and people came and said to him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. The days will come, when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day. No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; if he does, the patch tears away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear is made. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; if he does, the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and so are the skins; but new wine is for fresh skins."



## TUESDAY

### CYCLE 1

**First Reading.** *Rm. 5:12-21*

*The old and the new Adam.*

Therefore as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned -- sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more has the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. And the free gift is not like the effect of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

Then as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one man's act of righteousness leads to acquittal and life for all men. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous. Law came in, to increase the trespass; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Responsorial.** *Rm. 5: 20, 21, 19*

**R:** Where sin abounded, grace abounded all the more \* because, as sin had reigned with death, so also grace must reign through righteousness for eternal life.

**V:** As through the disobedience of only one man all have been constituted sinners, so also through the obedience of only one man all will be constituted just;

**R:** because, as sin had reigned with death, so also grace must reign through righteousness for eternal life

**Second Reading. Ps. 61: 4-6**

*Christ assumed on himself the obedience infusing it in us.*

**From the “Commentary on the Psalms” of St. Ambrose, bishop**

When our Lord Jesus Christ prepared himself **to assume our flesh** in order **to purify it in himself**, what did he have to eliminate first of all if not **the infection of the ancient sin**? Since sin had entered through the disobedience and the violation of a command of God, before everything else he had **restore the obedience** with the aim of destroying the seed of sin. Exactly from there was the root of sin derived: and, as a good doctor, he had first of all **to amputate the roots of evil**, in a way that the ends of the wound could feel the beneficial effects of the medicine. In vain, in fact, would you cure a scar, if the germ of infection was to lie hidden inside: the wound would be irritated to a greater extent, if it was to close externally while inside it the pus was still fermenting. **What would have been the use of the forgiveness of sin, if inside the affection for evil was to remain**? It would have been **like closing a wound without having cured it**.

Thus he wanted to clean up the wound in a way by **correcting the tendency to evil**, so that no sort of disobedience would remain. He therefore assumed on himself obedience before infusing it in us. And he would not have been able to do otherwise, because “as through the disobedience of only one man all have been constituted sinners, so also through the obedience of only one man, all will have been constituted just” (Rm. 5: 19).

This demonstrates that he who says that Christ assumed our flesh without the human tendencies errs seriously, and he who wants to separate man from man goes against the design of the Lord Jesus Christ himself, while there does not exist man without the tendencies that belong to the human nature. A man who was not subject to them would not be worthy either of the reward or of the punishment. In order to close the gushing out of error and, so to say, the doors of the sin that rushes in, Christ had to assume on himself and to heal that from which it had had its origin. From what would you be able to recognize as man the Lord Jesus whom you do not see in the flesh but whom you know has been man, if he had not had hunger and

thirst, if he had not cried, if he had not said “My soul is saddened unto death” (Mt. 28: 38)? It was exactly through all these manifestations that he revealed himself as man, he who for his divine works was esteemed as more than man. At that point, though being God, he wanted them to recognize him as a man, to refer to himself as man: “Why do you want to kill in me a man who has told you the truth?” (Jn. 8: 40 Vulg.). He is therefore one and undivided, distinct only in the diversity of works, not in the diversity of the person. He who comes from the Father is not different from he who was born of Mary; but proceeding from the Father, he assumed the flesh from the Virgin: he assumed humanity from the mother in order to take our weaknesses on himself.

And thus, as man he was subjected to infirmity, as man he suffered; and we saw him as man in the suffering: but victor over it, not overcome. He suffered for us, not for himself; and not for his but for our sins, in order to heal us with his suffering. **He assumed therefore our sins in order to carry their burden on himself and to expiate them.** In this way he will possess many in inheritance and many will divide the remains. He has taken it on himself in order to forgive them, he has expiated them in order to amend us. He accepted therefore to be able to suffer with us, and he accepted to subject himself for us. His prerogative was to submit himself to every thing: the capacity to submit himself he took from our nature.

**Responsorial.** *1 Pet. 2: 21; Mt. 8: 17*

**R:** Christ suffered for you \* leaving you an example, so that you could follow his footsteps.

**V:** He has taken our infirmities and he has burdened himself with our sicknesses.

**R:** leaving you an example, so that you could follow his footsteps.

## CYCLE 2

**First Reading.** *Gen. 12:1-9; 13: 2-18*

*Vocation and blessing of Abram.*

Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse; and by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves."

So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. And Abram took Sar'ai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions which they had gathered, and the persons that they had gotten in Haran; and they set forth to go to the land of Canaan. When they had come to the land of Canaan, Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land.

Then the LORD appeared to Abram, and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." So he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. Thence he removed to the mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD. And Abram journeyed on, still going toward the Negeb.

Now Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. And he journeyed on from the Negeb as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, to the place where he had made an altar at the first; and there Abram called on the name of the LORD. And Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents, so that the land could not support both of them dwelling together; for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together, and there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's cattle and the herdsmen of Lot's cattle. At that time the Canaanites and the Per'izzites dwelt in the land. Then Abram said to Lot, "Let there be no strife between you and me, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen; for we are kinsmen. Is not the whole land before you? Separate yourself from me. If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left."

And Lot lifted up his eyes, and saw that the Jordan valley was well watered everywhere like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, in the direction of Zo'ar; this was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomor'rah. So Lot chose for himself all the Jordan valley, and Lot journeyed east; thus they separated from each other. Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, while Lot dwelt among the cities of the valley and moved his tent as far as Sodom. Now the men of Sodom were wicked, great sinners against the LORD.

The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Lift up your eyes, and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward; for all the land which you see I will give to you and to your descendants for ever. I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your descendants also can be counted. Arise, walk through the length and the breadth of the land, for I will give it to you." So Abram moved his tent, and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which are at Hebron; and there he built an altar to the LORD.

**Responsorial.** *Cfr. Heb. 11: 8; Is. 51: 2*

**R:** Through faith Abraham, called by God, obeyed departing for a place that he was to receive in inheritance \* and he departed without knowing where he was going.

**V:** Look at Abraham your father, and at Sarah who has generated you; because I called him

**R:** and he departed without knowing where he was going.

**Second Reading.** *Nm. 4 – 5*

*Let us keep in mind the example of the holy apostles.*

**From the “Letter to the Corinthians” of St. Clement, pope and martyr.**

You see, brethren, how envy and jealousy of Cain led to the murder of a brother. Because of envy, also, our father Jacob fled from the face of Esau his brother. Envy made Joseph be persecuted unto death, and to come into bondage. Envy compelled Moses to



flee from the face of Pharaoh king of Egypt, when he heard these words from his fellow-countryman, "Who made you a judge or a ruler over us? Will you kill me, as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?" ( Ex. 2: 14) On account of envy, Aaron and Miriam had to make their abode outside the camp. Envy brought down Dathan and Abiram alive to Hades, because of the sedition that they excited against God's servant Moses. Through envy, David underwent the hatred not only of foreigners, but was also persecuted by Saul king of Israel.

But not to dwell upon ancient examples, let us come to the most recent spiritual heroes. Let us take the noble examples furnished in our own generation. Through envy and jealousy, the greatest and most righteous pillars of the Church have been persecuted and put to death. Let us set before our eyes the illustrious apostles. Peter, through unrighteous envy, endured not one or two, but numerous labours, and when he had at length suffered martyrdom, departed to the place of glory due to him. Owing to envy, Paul also obtained the reward of patient endurance, after being seven times thrown into captivity, compelled to flee, and stoned. After preaching both in the east and west, he gained the illustrious reputation due to his faith, having taught righteousness to the whole world, and come to the extreme limit of the west, and suffered martyrdom under the prefects. Thus was he removed from the world, and went into the holy place, having proved himself a striking example of patience.

**Responsorial.** *2 Cor. 4: 11; 1 Cor. 4: 9*

**R:** Always we who are alive, are exposed to death for the sake of Jesus \* so that also the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

**V:** For it seems to me that God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession, like men condemned to die in the arena. We have been made a spectacle to the whole universe, to the angels as well as to men;

**R:** so that also the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

**Gospel.** *Mk. 2:23-28*

One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grain fields; and as they made their way his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. And the

Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God, when Abi'athar was high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?" And he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath; so the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

## WEDNESDAY

### CYCLE 1

**First Reading.** *Rm. 6:1-11*

*Dead to sin, but alive for God, in Christ Jesus.*

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For he who has died is freed from sin.

But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. For we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

**Responsorial.** *Rm. 6: 4; Gal. 3: 27*

**R:** Through baptism we have been buried with Christ in death: \* so that as Christ was resurrected from the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we can walk in a new life.

**V:** For all of you who were united with Christ in baptism have been clothed with Christ:

**R:** so that as Christ was resurrected from the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we can walk in a new life.

**Second Reading.** *Book 4: 7*

*If we believe that Christ has risen for our justification,  
how can we love injustice?*

**From the “Commentary on the Letter to the Romans” of Origen, presbyter.**

Let us see why though being many the prerogatives of Christ – he in fact is called wisdom, virtue, justice, Word, truth and life – the Apostle, in support of our faith, nominates particularly his resurrection. The Apostle himself says elsewhere that “God has also resurrected us and has made us sit in the heavens, in Christ Jesus” (Ep. 2: 6).

This is what he wants to say to us: if you believe that Christ has risen from the dead, believe also that you too have risen together with him; and if you believe that he sits in heaven at the right hand of the Father, believe that you also have been placed, not among the creatures of the earth, but among those of heaven. and if you believe that you have died together with Christ, believe that you will live together with him: if you believe that Christ is dead to sin and alive for God, you also are dead to sin and you live for God. And with apostolic authority he exhorts us: “If you are risen with Christ, search for the things above, not those of the earth” (Col. 3: 1-2); because only he who acts in this way demonstrates that he believes in him who resurrected Jesus our Lord from the dead, and to him truly the faith will be credited as justice.

It is not possible in fact that, if someone has in himself some injustice, this can be credited to him as justice, even if he believes in him who has resurrected the Lord Jesus from the dead. Injustice cannot have anything in common with justice, as the light can have nothing in common with the darkness, or the life with death. So also,

not even to those who believe in Christ, but with unjust conduct do not put aside the old man, can the faith be credited as justice.

In the same way we can say that, like as to the unjust justice cannot be attributed, so also neither to the wicked can piety be attributed until he has abandoned the deep-rooted habits of vice and has not been clothed “with the new man, created according to God, and who renews himself for a full knowledge of God, in the image of his Creator” (Ep. 4: 24; Col. 3: 10). For this, speaking of the Lord Jesus, he adds: “He has been put to death for our sins and he has been resurrected for our justification” (Rm. 4: 25): and he shows in this way that we must detest and keep ourselves far away from all that for which Christ has been put to death. If we are convinced that Christ has been put to death for our sins, how can we not keep ourselves far away and not abhor every sin, remembering that it was exactly because of them that our Lord was condemned to death? If in fact we admit some society or friendship with sin, we demonstrate that we hold the death of Jesus Christ as a thing of no account, from the moment that we embrace and follow that which he has fought and overcome.

If I am convinced of this, how can I love that for which Christ suffered death? If I believe that he has been resurrected for my justification, how can I love injustice? Christ therefore justifies only those who, drawing an example from his resurrection, begin a new life and put aside the ancient habits of iniquity and of injustice that are the cause of death.

**Responsorial.** *2 Cor. 5: 15; Rm. 4: 25*

**R:** Christ has died for all \* so that those who live do not live anymore for themselves, but for him who has died and risen for them.

**V:** He has been put to death for our sins and he has been resurrected for our justification,

**R:** so that those who live do not live anymore for themselves, but for him who has died and risen for them.

**First Reading. Gen. 14:1-24**

*Melchizedek blesses the victorious Abram.*

In the days of Am'raphel king of Shinar, Ar'ioch king of Ella'sar, Ched-or-lao'mer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goi'im, these kings made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomor'rah, Shinab king of Admah, Sheme'ber king of Zeboi'im, and the king of Bela (that is, Zo'ar). And all these joined forces in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea). Twelve years they had served Ched-or-lao'mer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled. In the fourteenth year Ched-or-lao'mer and the kings who were with him came and subdued the Reph'aim in Ash'teroth-karna'im, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Sha'veh-kiriatha'im, and the Horites in their Mount Se'ir as far as El-paran on the border of the wilderness; then they turned back and came to Enmish'pat (that is, Kadesh), and subdued all the country of the Amal'ekites, and also the Amorites who dwelt in Haz'azon-ta'mar.

Then the king of Sodom, the king of Gomor'rah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboi'im, and the king of Bela (that is, Zo'ar) went out, and they joined battle in the Valley of Siddim with Ched-or-lao'mer king of Elam, Tidal king of Goi'im, Am'raphel king of Shinar, and Ar'ioch king of Ella'sar, four kings against five. Now the Valley of Siddim was full of bitumen pits; and as the kings of Sodom and Gomor'rah fled, some fell into them, and the rest fled to the mountain. So the enemy took all the goods of Sodom and Gomor'rah, and all their provisions, and went their way; they also took Lot, the son of Abram's brother, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

Then one who had escaped came, and told Abram the Hebrew, who was living by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and of Aner; these were allies of Abram. When Abram heard that his kinsman had been taken captive, he led forth his trained men, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen of them, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. And he divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and routed them and pursued them to Hobah, north of Damascus. Then he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his kinsman Lot with his goods, and the women and the people.

After his return from the defeat of Ched-or-lao'mer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of

Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley).

And Mel-chiz'edek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, maker of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!" And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

And the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons, but take the goods for yourself." But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have sworn to the LORD God Most High, maker of heaven and earth, that I would not take a thread or a sandal-thong or anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich'. I will take nothing but what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me; let Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre take their share."

**Responsorial.** *Cfr. Heb. 5: 5-6; 7: 20 – 21*

**R:** Christ did not attribute the glory of high priest to himself, but it was conferred on him by the one who said: \*You are a priest forever, like Melchizedek of old.

**V:** The others became priests without an oath; Jesus instead by the oath of the one who had said to him:

**R:** You are a priest forever, like Melchizedek of old.

**Second Reading.** *Nm. 6 – 8*

*In every generation the Lord has conceded the possibility of conversion to those who want to return to Him.*

**From the “Letter to the Corinthians” of St. Clement, pope and martyr.**

To these men who spent their lives in the practice of holiness, there is to be added a great multitude of the elect, who, having through envy endured many indignities and tortures, furnished us with a most excellent example. Through envy, those women, Danaids and Dircae, being persecuted, after they had suffered terrible and unspeakable torments, finished the course of their faith with steadfastness, and though weak in body, received a noble reward. Envy has alienated wives from their husbands, and changed

that saying of our father Adam, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." (Gen. 2.: 23) Envy and strife have overthrown great cities and rooted up mighty nations.

These things, beloved, we write unto you, not merely to admonish you of your duty, but also to remind ourselves. For we are struggling in the same arena, and the same conflict is assigned to both of us. Wherefore let us give up vain and fruitless cares, and approach to the glorious and venerable rule of our holy calling. Let us attend to what is good, pleasing, and acceptable in the sight of Him who is our Creator. Let us look steadfastly to the blood of Christ, and see how precious that blood is to God, which, having been shed for our salvation, has set the grace of repentance before the whole world.

Let us turn to every age that has passed, and learn that, from generation to generation, the Lord has granted a place of repentance to all such as would be converted unto Him. Noah preached repentance, and as many as listened to him were saved. Jonah proclaimed destruction to the Ninevites; but they, repenting of their sins, propitiated God by prayer, and obtained salvation, although they were aliens [to the covenant] of God. The ministers of the grace of God have, by the inspiration the Holy Spirit, spoken of repentance; and the Lord of all things has himself declared with an oath regarding it, "As I live, says the Lord, I desire not the death of the sinner, but rather his repentance;" (Ez. 33: 11) adding, moreover, this gracious declaration, "Repent O house of Israel, of your iniquity. Say to the children of My people, Though your sins reach from earth to heaven, and though they be redder than scarlet, and blacker than sackcloth, yet if you turn to Me with your whole heart, and say, Father! I will listen to you, as to a holy people." (cfr. Ez. 18: 30; Is. 1: 18).

And in another place He speaks thus: "Wash you, and become clean; put away the wickedness of your souls from before mine eyes; cease from your evil ways, and learn to do good; seek out judgment, deliver the oppressed, judge the fatherless, and see that justice is done to the widow; and come, and let us reason together. He declares, Though your sins are like crimson, I will make them white as snow; though they are like scarlet, I will whiten them like wool. And if you are willing and obey Me, you shall eat

the good of the land; but if you refuse, and will not hearken unto Me, the sword shall devour you, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken these things.” (Is. 1: 16 – 20).

Desiring, therefore, that all His beloved should be partakers of repentance, He has confirmed His almighty will with these words.

**Responsorial.** *2 Pet. 1: 3, 4; Rm. 12: 2*

**R:** God has called us with his glory and power, so that we could become participants of his divine nature \* having fled from the corruption that is in the world because of the concupiscence.

**V:** Do not conform yourselves to the mentality of this age, but transform yourselves renewing your minds

**R:** having fled from the corruption that is in the world because of the concupiscence.

**Gospel.** *Mk. 3:1-6*

Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there who had a withered hand. And they watched him, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him. And he said to the man who had the withered hand, "Come here." And he said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent. And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. The Pharisees went out, and immediately held counsel with the Hero'di-ans against him, how to destroy him.



# THURSDAY

## CYCLE 1

**First Reading.** *Rm. 6: 12-23*

*Instruments of Justice for God.*

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. Do not yield your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but yield yourselves to God as men who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments of righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Do you not know that if you yield yourselves to any one as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?

But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.

I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once yielded your members to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification. When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But then what return did you get from the things of which you are now ashamed? The end of those things is death.

But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Responsorial.** *Rm. 6: 22, 16*

**R:** But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, \* the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.

**V:** You are slaves to the one whom you obey: whether you are a slave to sin that leads to death, or of obedience that leads to justice.

**R:** The benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.

**Second Reading.** *Disc. 41: 5*

*Sin divides; the Lord Jesus is the mediator who reconciles.*

**From the “Treatise on the Gospel of John” of St. Augustine, bishop.**

For the Lord says, “You were sold without price, and you shall be redeemed without money.” (Is. 52: 3) Without price, that is, of your own; because of mine. So says the Lord; for He Himself has paid the price, not in money, but in His own blood. Otherwise we had remained both slaves and wretches. From this bondage, then, we are set free by the Lord alone. He who was not subject to it, Himself delivers us from it; for He alone came without sin in this flesh. For the little ones whom you see carried in their mothers’ hands cannot yet walk, and are already in fetters; for they have received from Adam what Christ loosens them from. To them also, when baptized, pertains that grace which is promised by the Lord; for He only can deliver from sin who came without sin, and was made a sacrifice for sin. For you heard when the apostle was read: “We are ambassadors,” he says, “for Christ, as though God were exhorting you by us; we beseech you in Christ’s name,” — that is, as if Christ were beseeching you, and for what? — “to be reconciled unto God.” (2 Cor. 5: 20)

If the apostle exhorts and beseeches us to be reconciled unto God, then evidently we were enemies to God. For no one is reconciled unless from a state of enmity. And we have become enemies not by nature, but by sin. From the same source are we the servants of sin, that we are the enemies of God. God has no enemies in a state of freedom. They must be slaves; and slaves will they remain unless delivered by Him to whom they wished by their sins to be enemies.

Therefore, says he, “We beseech you in Christ’s name to be reconciled unto God.”

But how are we reconciled, save by the removal from between of that which separates Himself and us? For He says by the prophet, “He has not made the ear heavy that it should not hear; but your iniquities have separated you from your God.” (Is. 59: 2). And so, then, we are not reconciled, unless that which is in the midst is taken

away, and something else is put in its place. For there is a separating medium, and, on the other hand, there is a reconciling Mediator. The separating medium is sin, the reconciling Mediator is the Lord Jesus Christ: "For there is one God and Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (1 Tm. 2: 5).

To take then away the separating wall, which is sin, that Mediator has come, and the priest has Himself become the sacrifice. And because He was made a sacrifice for sin, offering Himself as a whole burnt-offering on the cross of His passion, the apostle, after saying, "We beseech you in Christ's name to be reconciled unto God," — as if we had said, How shall we be able to be reconciled? — goes on to say, "He has made Him," that is, Christ Himself, "who knew no sin, [to be] sin for us, that we may be the righteousness of God in Him," (2 Cor. 5: 21) "Him," he says, Christ Himself our God, "who knew no sin." For He came in the flesh, that is, in the likeness of sinful flesh, (Rm. 8: 3) but not in sinful flesh, because He had no sin at all; and therefore became a true sacrifice for sin, because He Himself had no sin.

**Responsorial.** *1 Pet. 2: 22, 24; Is. 53: 5*

**R:** He who had not committed sin and on whose mouth no deceit was to be found, bore our sins in his body on the wood of the cross \* so that, not living anymore for sin, we could live through justice.

**V:** The punishment that gives us salvation fell on him; by his wounds we have been healed,

**R:** so that, not living anymore for sin, we could live through justice.

## CYCLE 2

**First Reading.** *Gen. 15:1-21*

*The Lord concludes a covenant with Abram.*

After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Elie'zer of Damascus?"

And Abram said, "Behold, you have given me no offspring; and a slave born in my house will be my heir." And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; your own son shall be your heir." And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your descendants be." And he believed the LORD; and he reckoned it to him as righteousness. And he said to him, "I am the LORD who brought you from Ur of the Chalde'ans, to give you this land to possess." But he said, "O Lord GOD, how am I to know that I shall possess it?" He said to him, "Bring me a heifer three years old, a she-goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." And he brought him all these, cut them in two, and laid each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two.

And when birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away. As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram; and lo, a dread and great darkness fell upon him. Then the LORD said to Abram, "Know of a surety that your descendants will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and will be slaves there, and they will be oppressed for four hundred years; but I will bring judgment on the nation which they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions.

As for yourself, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. And they shall come back here in the fourth generation; for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."

When the sun had gone down and it was dark, behold, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphra'tes, the land of the Ken'ites, the Ken'izzites, the Kad'monites, the Hittites, the Per'izzites, the Reph'aim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Gir'gashites and the Jeb'usites."

### **Responsorial.** *Rm. 4: 3, 18*

**R:** Abraham had faith in God and this was accredited to him as justice \* and he was called a friend of God.

**V:** He had faith hoping against all hope and thus he became the father of many nations

**R:** and he was called a friend of God.

**Second Reading.** *Nn. 9 – 11*

*Abraham, called friend, was found faithful.*

**From the “Letter to the Corinthians” of St. Clement, pope and martyr.**

Wherefore, let us yield obedience to His excellent and glorious will; and imploring His mercy and loving-kindness, while we forsake all fruitless labours, and strife, and envy, which leads to death, let us turn and have recourse to His compassions.

Let us steadfastly contemplate those who have perfectly ministered to His excellent glory. Let us take (for instance) Enoch, who, being found righteous in obedience, was taken up from this world, and death was never known to happen to him. Noah, being found faithful, preached regeneration to the world through his ministry; and the Lord saved by him the animals that, with one accord, entered into the ark. Abraham, was called “the friend of God,” was found faithful, inasmuch as he rendered obedience to the words of God. He, in the exercise of obedience, went out from his own country, and from his kindred, and from his father’s house, in order that, by forsaking a small territory, and a weak family, and an insignificant house, he might inherit the promises of God. For God said to him, “Get out from your country, and from your kindred, and from your father’s house, into the land which I shall show you. And I will make you a great nation, and will bless you, and make your name great, and you will become a blessing. And I will bless them that bless you, and curse them that curse you; and in you shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” (Gen. 12: 1- 3). And again, on his departing from Lot, God said to him. “Lift up your eyes, and look from the place where you now are, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see, to you will I give it, and to your seed for ever. And I will make your seed as the dust of the earth, so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall your seed also be numbered.” (Gen. 13: 14 – 16). And again the Scripture says, “God brought forth Abram, and said to him, Look up now to heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them; so shall your seed be. And Abram believed

God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.” (Gen. 15: 5 – 6) On account of his faith and hospitality, a son was given him in his old age; and in the exercise of obedience, he offered him as a sacrifice to God on one of the mountains that He showed him.

On account of his hospitality and godliness, Lot was saved out of Sodom when all the country round was punished by means of fire and brimstone, the Lord thus making it manifest that He does not forsake those that hope in Him, but gives up such as depart from Him to punishment and torture. For Lot's wife, who went forth with him, being of a different mind from himself and not continuing in agreement with him as to the command which had been given them, was made an example of, so as to be a pillar of salt unto this day. This was done that all might know that those who are of a double mind, and who distrust the power of God, bring down judgment on themselves, and become a sign to all succeeding generations.

**Responsorial.** *Ne. 9: 7, 8; Heb. 11: 8*

**R:** You are the Lord, the God who has chosen Abraham. \* you have found his heart faithful in front of you and you have established a covenant with him.

**V:** Through faith he obeyed departing for a place that he was to receive in inheritance, and he departed without knowing where he was going.

**R:** you have found his heart faithful in front of you and you have established a covenant with him.

**Gospel.** *Mk. 3:7-12*

Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the sea, and a great multitude from Galilee followed; also from Judea and Jerusalem and Idume'a and from beyond the Jordan and from about Tyre and Sidon a great multitude, hearing all that he did, came to him.

And he told his disciples to have a boat ready for him because of the crowd, lest they should crush him; for he had healed many, so that all who had diseases pressed upon him to touch him. And whenever the unclean spirits beheld him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God." And he strictly ordered them not to make him known.

# FRIDAY

## CYCLE 1

**First Reading.** *Rm. 7:1-13*

*I have not known sin if not for the law.*

Do you not know, brethren -- for I am speaking to those who know the law -- that **the law is binding on a person only during his life**? Thus law binds a married woman to her husband as long as he lives; but if her husband dies she is discharged from the law concerning the husband.

Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress.

Likewise, my brethren, **you have died to the law** through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead in order that we may bear fruit for God.

While we were **living in the flesh**, our **sinful passions**, **aroused by the law**, were at work in our members to **bear fruit for death**. But now we are discharged from the law, dead to that which held us captive, so that **we serve not under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit**.

What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet, if it had not been for the law, I should not have known sin. I should not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not covet." But sin, finding opportunity in the commandment, wrought in me all kinds of covetousness. Apart from the law sin lies dead. I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died; the very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me.

For sin, finding opportunity in the commandment, deceived me and by it killed me. So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good. Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, working death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure.

**Responsorial.** *Rm. 7: 6; 5: 5*

**R:** Now we are discharged from the law, dead to that which held us captive,  
\* so that we serve not under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit.

**V:** The love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

**R:** so that we serve not under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit.

**Second Reading.** *Risp. 2: 2-4*

*What shall we give in exchange to the Lord for all that he gives us?*

**From the “Longer Rules” of St. Basil the Great, bishop.**

What words can worthily describe the gifts of God, which are so many as to be innumerable, and so excellent that one alone is sufficient to make us render all thanks to the Giver?

But the supreme benefit of creation we could not pass over even if we wished. To be silent about it is absolutely impossible for any man with a sound mind and reasoning power; but to speak of it worthily is still more impossible. For God made man in his image and likeness, deemed him worthy of knowledge of himself, equipped him with reason beyond all other creatures, allowed him to luxuriate in the inconceivable beauties of paradise, made him ruler of all earthly things. Then when he had been deceived by the serpent and had fallen into sin, and through sin into death and what follows from it, God did not neglect him. First, God gave man a law to aid him, set angels to guard him and care for him, sent prophets to reprove vice and teach virtue. By threats, he frustrated the impulses of vice, by promises he stirred up man’s zeal for goodness. By the frequent example of many persons who served as a warning for others, he made clear in advance the end of virtue and of vice. And, to crown these and other mercies of the same kind, God was not estranged from mankind who persisted in disobedience.

For we were not neglected by the goodness of the Master, nor even did we hinder his love towards us, though we had insulted our benefactor by callous indifference to his gifts. On the contrary, we were called back from death and made alive again by our Lord Jesus



Christ himself. In Christ also, the manner of beneficence is even more marvellous; for 'being in the form of God, he thought it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant' (Phil. 2: 6 – 7).

Moreover he took our weaknesses and bore our diseases and was wounded on our behalf that by his stripes we may be healed (cfr Is. 53: 4 – 5). And he redeemed us from the curse, having become a curse on our behalf (cfr. Ps. 3: 13) and underwent the most dishonourable death, that he might bring us to the life of glory. And he was not content merely to resurrect us when we were dead, but he bestowed the dignity of divinity, and prepared eternal resting-places, surpassing all human thought in the greatness of their delight.

What then shall we render to the Lord for all the benefits that he has bestowed upon us? (Ps. 115: 12) He is so good as to ask no recompense but is content merely with being loved in return for his gifts. When I think of this – entire let me speak freely of my personal feelings – I fall into a fearful shuddering and terror; lest perchance through carelessness of mind or absorption in vain things I should fall from the love of God and become a reproach to Christ.

**Responsorial.** *Ps. 102: 2-4; Gal. 2: 20*

**R:** My soul, give thanks to the Lord and never forget all his blessings. \* He redeems me from the grave, he crowns me with love and compassion.

**V:** He loved me and sacrificed himself for me.

**R:** He redeems me from the grave, he crowns me with love and compassion.

## CYCLE 2

**First Reading.** *Gen. 16:1-16*

*The birth of Ishmael.*

Now Sar'ai, Abram's wife, bore him no children. She had an Egyptian maid whose name was Hagar; and Sar'ai said to Abram, "Behold now, the LORD has prevented me from bearing children; go in to my maid; it may be

that I shall obtain children by her." And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sar'ai.

So, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, Sar'ai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her maid, and gave her to Abram her husband as a wife. And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress.

And Sar'ai said to Abram, "May the wrong done to me be on you! I gave my maid to your embrace, and when she saw that she had conceived, she looked on me with contempt. May the LORD judge between you and me!" But Abram said to Sar'ai, "Behold, your maid is in your power; do to her as you please." Then Sar'ai dealt harshly with her, and she fled from her. The angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, the spring on the way to Shur. And he said, "Hagar, maid of Sar'ai, where have you come from and where are you going?" She said, "I am fleeing from my mistress Sar'ai."

The angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit to her." The angel of the LORD also said to her, "I will so greatly multiply your descendants that they cannot be numbered for multitude." And the angel of the LORD said to her, "Behold, you are with child, and shall bear a son; you shall call his name Ish'mael; because the LORD has given heed to your affliction. [Gen 16:12] He shall be a wild ass of a man, his hand against every man and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell over against all his kinsmen."

So she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, "You are a God of seeing"; for she said, "Have I really seen God and remained alive after seeing him?" Therefore the well was called Beer-la'hai-roi; it lies between Kadesh and Bered. And Hagar bore Abram a son; and Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ish'mael. Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ish'mael to Abram.

**Responsorial.** *Gal. 4: 22, 31, 30*

**R:** It is written that Abraham had two sons, one of the slave and one of the free woman. \* So also, brothers, we are not children of a slave, but of a free

woman.

**V:** However, what does the Scripture say? He sent away the slave and her son, for the slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman's son.

**R:** So also, brothers, we are not children of a slave, but of a free woman.

**Second Reading.** *Nm. 12 – 13*

*Let us be humble of heart.*

**From the “Letter to the Corinthians” of St. Clement, pope and martyr.**

On account of her faith and hospitality, Rahab the harlot was saved. For when spies were sent by Joshua, the son of Nun, to Jericho, the king of the country ascertained that they had come to spy out their land, and sent men to seize them, in order that, when taken, they might be put to death. But the hospitable Rahab receiving them, concealed them on the roof of her house under some stalks of flax. And when the men sent by the king arrived and said “There came men unto you who are to spy out our land; bring them forth, for so the king commands,” she answered them, “The two men whom you seek came unto me, but quickly departed again and are gone,” thus not revealing the spies to them. Then she said to the men, “I know assuredly that the Lord your God has given you this city, for the fear and dread of you have fallen on its inhabitants. When therefore you shall have taken it, keep me and the house of my father in safety.” And they said to her, “It shall be as you have spoken to us. As soon, therefore, as you know that we are at hand, you shall gather all your family under your roof, and they shall be preserved, but all that are found outside of your dwelling shall perish.” (cfr: Jos. 2: 1 – 19). Moreover, they gave her a sign to this effect, that she should hang forth from her house a scarlet thread. And thus they made it manifest that redemption should flow through the blood of the Lord to all them that believe and hope in God.

You see, beloved, that there was not only faith, but also prophecy, in this woman.

Let us therefore, brethren, be of humble mind, laying aside all haughtiness, and pride, and foolishness, and angry feelings; and let us act according to that which is written (for the Holy Spirit says, “Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, neither let the rich man glory in his riches; but let

him that glories glory in the Lord, in diligently seeking Him, and doing judgment and righteousness” (Jer. 9: 22-23), being especially mindful of the words of the Lord Jesus which He spoke, teaching us meekness and long-suffering.

For thus He spoke: “Be merciful, that you may obtain mercy; forgive, that it may be forgiven to you; as you do, so shall it be done unto you; as you judge, so shall you be judged; as you are kind, so shall kindness be shown to you; with what measure you mete, with the same it shall be measured to you.” (cfr: Lk. 6: 36, 37, 38; Mt. 7: 1-2). By this precept and by these rules let us establish ourselves, that we walk with all humility in obedience to His holy words. For the holy word said, “On whom shall I look, but on him that is meek and peaceable, and who trembles at my words?” (Is. 66: 2).

**Responsorial.** *2 Cor. 10: 17, 18; Jer. 9: 23*

**R:** He who boasts, let him boast in the Lord, \* because not the one who recommends himself is approved, but he whom the Lord recommends.

**V:** He who wants to glory let him boast of this: of having wisdom and knowledge of me, because I am the Lord:

**R:** because not the one who recommends himself is approved, but he whom the Lord recommends.

**Gospel.** *Mk. 3:13-19*

And he went up on the mountain, and called to him those whom he desired; and they came to him. And he appointed twelve, to be with him, and to be sent out to preach and have authority to cast out demons: Simon whom he surnamed Peter; James the son of Zeb'edee and John the brother of James, whom he surnamed Bo-aner'ges, that is, sons of thunder; Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

**SATURDAY**

**CYCLE 1**

**First Reading.** *Rm. 7:14-25*

*I am of the flesh, sold as a slave to sin.*

We know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin. I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.

Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. So then it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me.

So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God, in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I of myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

**Responsorial.** *Gal. 5: 18, 22, 25*

**R:** If you let yourselves be guided by the Spirit, you will not be anymore under the law. \* The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace.

**V:** If we live of the Spirit, we will walk also according to the Spirit.

**R:** The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace.

**Second Reading.** *Prol. 5: 201 – 202*

*From the knowledge of Jesus Christ  
flows the comprehension of the entire Sacred Scriptures.*

**From the “Breviloquio” of St. Bonaventure, bishop.**

The source of scripture is not attributable to human investigation, but to divine revelation that flows ‘from the Father of lights’. From him all paternity in heaven and earth is named (Ep. 3: 15), and from him through his Son, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit flows, into us, and through the Holy Spirit, dividing and distributing his gifts to individuals as he pleases, faith is

given to us, and through faith Christ dwells in our hearts (cfr. Ep. 3: 17). This is the knowledge of Jesus Christ from whom the strength and understanding of the whole of Holy Scripture flows as from its source. Hence it is impossible that anyone should enter into that knowledge unless he first have infused into himself faith in Christ, the light, the door, and the very foundation of all scripture. This is the faith of all supernatural illuminations as long as we are absent from the Lord and the foundation that stabilizes us, the light that directs us, and the door that lets us in. Further, the wisdom given us by God must be determined according to the measure of faith lest anyone 'think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith which God has assigned to him' (cfr. Rm. 12: 3).

The result or fruit of Holy Scripture is not simply any kind, but rather a fullness of eternal happiness. In scripture are the words of eternal life. It is written not only that we may believe, but also that we may possess eternal life, in which we shall see and love, and our desires will be completely satisfied. When these desires are satisfied, we shall know the overwhelming love of knowledge and thus we shall abound unto all the fullness of God (Ep. 3: 19). Divine scripture tries to lead us on to this plenitude in accord with the truth of the sentence of the Apostle quoted above. This, then, is the end and this the intention with which Holy Scripture should be studied, taught, and even heard.

In order to arrive at that fruit, by progress along the true path of the scriptures, we must begin at the beginning. We must come with true faith to the Father of lights, prostrating our heart before him, so that he may grant us the true knowledge of Jesus Christ through his Son in the Holy Spirit. With this knowledge we must ask for a love of him, so that finally achieving a solid faith and a deep-rooted love, we may be able to know the length and breadth, height and depth, of holy scripture (Ep. 3: 18). Through this knowledge we have to arrive at the fullness of knowledge and plenitude of love for the Most Blessed Trinity. All the desires of holy men tend there; the end and complement of all truth and goodness is to be found there.

**Responsorial.** *Lk. 24: 27, 25*

**R:** Starting with Moses and going through all the prophets, \* Jesus explained to his disciples the passages throughout the scriptures that were about himself.

**V:** How dull you are! How slow to believe all that the prophets said!

**R:** Jesus explained to his disciples the passages throughout the scriptures that were about himself.

## CYCLE 2

**First Reading.** *Gen. 17:1-27*

*Circumcision as a sign of the covenant between God and Abram.*

**From the book of Genesis.**

When Abram was ninety-nine years old the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly." Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, "Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.

I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come forth from you. And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. And I will give to you, and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojourning, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." And God said to Abraham, "As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your descendants after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between you and me. He that is eight days old among you shall be circumcised; every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house, or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your

offspring, both he that is born in your house and he that is bought with your money, shall be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant. Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant." And God said to Abraham, "As for Sar'ai your wife, you shall not call her name Sar'ai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her; I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said to himself, "Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" And Abraham said to God, "O that Ish'mael might live in your sight!" God said, "No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him. As for Ish'mael, I have heard you; behold, I will bless him and make him fruitful and multiply him exceedingly; he shall be the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. But I will establish my covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this season next year." When he had finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham.

Then Abraham took Ish'mael his son and all the slaves born in his house or bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very day, as God had said to him. Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. And Ish'mael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. That very day Abraham and his son Ish'mael were circumcised; and all the men of his house, those born in the house and those bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

**Responsorial.** *Gen. 17: 1, 2, 4*

**R:** The Lord appeared to Abraham and said to him: I am God Almighty: \* walk before me and be blameless.

**V:** Behold: my covenant is with you, and you will be the father of a multitude of nations.



**R:** walk before me and be blameless.

**Second Reading.** Nm. 14:1 – 3, 16: 1- 5; 17: 1 – 5

*Observe what model has been presented to us.*

**From the “Letter to the Corinthians” of St. Clement, pope and martyr.**

It is right and holy therefore, men and brethren, rather to obey God than to follow those who, through pride and sedition, have become the leaders of a detestable emulation. For we shall incur no slight injury, but rather great danger, if we rashly yield ourselves to the inclinations of men who aim at exciting strife and tumults, so as to draw us away from what is good. Let us be kind one to another after the pattern of the tender mercy and benignity of our Creator.

For Christ belongs to those who are humble-minded, and not to those who exalt themselves over His flock. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Sceptre of the majesty of God, did not come in the pomp of pride or arrogance, although He might have done so, but in a lowly condition, as the Holy Spirit had declared regarding Him. He bears our iniquities, and is in sorrow for our sakes; yet we supposed that [on His own account] He was exposed to labour, and stripes, and affliction. But He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we were healed (cfr. Is. 53: 4-5).

You see, beloved, what is the example that has been given us; for if the Lord thus humbled Himself, what shall we who have through Him come under the yoke of His grace do? Let us be imitators also of those who in goat-skins and sheep-skins went about proclaiming the coming of Christ; I mean Elijah, Elisha, and Ezekiel among the prophets, with those others to whom a like testimony is borne in Scripture. Abraham was specially honoured, and was called the friend of God; yet he, earnestly regarding the glory of God, humbly declared, “I am but dust and ashes.” (Gen. 18: 27). Moreover, it is thus written of Job, “Job was a righteous man, and blameless, truthful, God-fearing, and one that kept himself from all evil.” (Job. 1: 1). But bringing an accusation against himself, he said, “No man is free from defilement, even if his life be but of one day.” (cfr. Jb. 14: 4-5). Moses was called faithful in all God’s house (Nm. 12: 7); and through his instrumentality, God punished Egypt with plagues and tortures. Yet he, though thus greatly honoured, did not adopt lofty language, but said, when

the divine oracle came to him out of the bush, “Who am I, that You should send me? I am a man of a feeble voice and a slow tongue.” (cfr. Ex. 3: 11).

**Responsorial.** *1 Pet. 5: 5; Mt. 11: 29*

**R:** Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another \* because God opposes the proud but gives his grace to the humble.

**V:** Learn from me who am meek and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls,

**R:** because God opposes the proud but gives his grace to the humble.

**Gospel.** *Mk. 3:20-21*

Then he went home; and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for people were saying, "He is beside himself."