

READINGS AND REFLECTION FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

A READING FROM THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL 16:1, 6-7, 10-13

In the presence of the Lord God, they anointed David king of Israel.

The Lord said to Samuel, "Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen myself a king among his sons."

When Samuel arrived, he caught sight of Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed one stands there before him," but the Lord said to Samuel, "Take no notice of his appearance or his height for I have rejected him; God does not see as man sees; man looks at appearances but the Lord looks at the heart."

Jesse presented his seven sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen these." He then asked Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?"

He answered, "There is still one left, the youngest; he is out looking after the sheep."

Then Samuel said to Jesse, "Send for him; we will not sit down to eat until he comes."

Jesse had him sent for, a boy of fresh complexion, with fine eyes and pleasant bearing.

The Lord said, "Come, anoint him, for this is the one." At this, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him where he stood with his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord seized on David and stayed with him from that day on.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM PSALM 22

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD. THERE IS NOTHING I SHALL WANT.

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose.

Near restful waters he leads me, to revive my drooping spirit.

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD. THERE IS NOTHING I SHALL WANT.

He guides me along the right path; he is true to his name.

If I should walk in the valley of darkness, no evil would I fear.

You are there with your crook and your staff; with these you give me comfort.

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD. THERE IS NOTHING I SHALL WANT.

You have prepared a banquet for me in the sight of my foes.

My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing.

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD. THERE IS NOTHING I SHALL WANT.

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life.

In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever.

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD. THERE IS NOTHING I SHALL WANT.

A READING FROM THE LETTER OF ST PAUL TO THE EPHESIANS 2:4-10

When we were dead through sins, he brought us to life.

God loved us with so much love that he was generous with his mercy:

when we were dead through our sins, he brought us to life with Christ

- it is through grace that you have been saved - and raised us up with him and gave us a place with him in heaven, in Christ Jesus.

This was to show for all ages to come, through his goodness towards us in Christ Jesus, how infinitely rich he is in grace. Because it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith; not by anything of your own, but by a gift from God; not by anything that you have done, so that nobody can claim the credit. We are God's work of art, created in Christ Jesus to live the good life as from the beginning he had meant us to live it.

The Word of the Lord.

Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!
God loved the world so much, he gave us his only Son,
that all who believe in him might have eternal life.

A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN 3:14-21

God sent his Son into the world that we might be saved through him.
Jesus said to Nicodemus: "The Son of Man must be lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.
Yes, God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believed in him may not be lost but may have eternal life.
For God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world, but so that through him the world might be saved.
No one who believes in him will be condemned, but whoever refuses to believe is condemned already, because he has refused to believe in the name of God's only Son.
On these grounds is sentence pronounced: that though the light has come into the world, men have shown they prefer darkness to the light because their deeds were evil.
And indeed, everybody who does wrong hates the light and avoids it, for fear his actions should be exposed; but the man who lives by the truth comes out into the light, so that it may be plainly seen that what he does is done in God."

The Gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTION

Psalm 22 is rich for our sense of God guiding, leading, reviving, companionship and providing for us. St Ignatius *Examen* prayer can help us "check in" daily in terms of our experiences. A simple website for this is [A daily examen for children and teens - Teaching Catholic Kids](#). Look for others.

A simple Examen could be:

- 1. Enter God's presence** with the Sign of the Cross. "Father, you have been with me since I woke up until now. Spirit, be with me as I call to mind my day and its gifts for me."
- 2. What happened today?** Review the events of the day, moving through what happened in the morning at home or wherever I have been and then in the afternoon and evening. What range of emotions did I experience – with whom and in what contexts?
- 3. How was God present, and how did I respond?** Can I now perceive how God was with me - in moments of beauty and joy and also during times of challenge and sadness? How might God have been calling me to be loving or when I was lacking in this?
- 4. Pray the day.** What could I have learnt from Jesus if He was in the same situation? I ask the Spirit of God to help me pray about all that happened for my own and others' good? + Through Christ, I entrust all prayers and concerns to the Father.