

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

LECTIONARY #35

READING I Jeremiah 31:31-34

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah

The days are coming, says the LORD,

when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel  
and the house of Judah.

It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers

the day I took them by the hand

to lead them forth from the land of Egypt;

for they broke my covenant,

and I had to show myself their master, says the LORD.

But this is the covenant that I will make

with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD.

I will place my law within them and write it upon their hearts;

I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

No longer will they have need to teach their friends

and relatives

how to know the LORD.

All, from least to greatest, shall know me, says the LORD,

for I will forgive their evildoing and remember their sin

no more.

Jeremiah = jayr-uh-mi-uh

Recall the energized feeling you might have

had from a clean bill of health or a new

beginning. Proclaim this oracle with the

same sense of optimism.

Judah = joo-duh

Don't use a tone of despair; God has forgiven  
his people.

God's performative words are incredible:

he claims us! Consider familiarizing yourself

with this line so that you can deliver it

looking directly at the assembly. Emphasize

"my" to show possession.

There are options for today's readings.  
Contact your parish staff to learn which  
readings will be used.

READING I

Today's first reading is a  
centerpiece of "Jeremiah's  
Book of Comfort" or "Little Book of Conso-

lation," which consists of Jeremiah 30-33.

Written amid Judah's downfall, Jerusalem's

destruction, and the Babylonian exile, the

Book of Jeremiah consists of repeated

lamentations, predictions of destruction, and

general expressions of woe. But this small

portion conveys a hopeful message. In it,  
God extends a new promise to the chosen  
people. God will forge a new covenant with  
them, despite their having broken the pre-  
vious covenant, which God forged with  
them in the Law (Torah) given at Sinai. Like  
the Sinai covenant's divine legal teaching,  
this new covenant will consist of God's  
instruction (torah). However, the new cov-  
enant will not be an exterior reality written  
on tablets that the people will have to  
internalize through a process of intergen-  
erational teaching and learning. Rather,  
God will instruct the people directly by

writing the law of the new covenant on  
their hearts. By establishing this new cov-  
enant, God will reforge the intimate relation-  
ship with the people that was ruptured by  
their disobedience to the prior instruction.  
And God rearticulates the nature of that  
relationship, which corresponds to the old  
covenant: "I will be their God, and they  
shall be my people." Yet this new covenant  
will not be one that perpetuates servitude  
to sin. Instead, God promises to forgive and  
forget the sins of the people. Of course,  
this raises questions about God's justice:  
How can it be that God gave a just law and

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 51:3-4, 12-13, 14-15 (12a)

R. Create a clean heart in me, O God.

Have mercy on me, O God, in your  
goodness;  
in the greatness of your compassion wipe  
out my offense.  
Thoroughly wash me from my guilt  
and of my sin cleanse me.  
A clean heart create for me, O God,  
and a steadfast spirit renew within me.  
Cast me not out from your presence,  
and your Holy Spirit take not from me.  
Give me back the joy of your salvation,  
and a willing spirit sustain in me.  
I will teach transgressors your ways,  
and sinners shall return to you.

For meditation and context:

READING II Hebrews 5:7-9

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

In the days when Christ Jesus was in the flesh,  
he offered prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears  
to the one who was able to save him from death,  
and he was heard because of his reverence.  
Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered,  
and when he was made perfect,  
he became the source of eternal salvation for all who  
obey him.

Read about Jesus' agony in the garden  
(Luke 22:39-49) to feel the anguish Paul  
is referring to.

Jesus' perfect obedience is the source of our  
salvation and becomes our example for the  
life of discipleship. Proclaim these important  
words clearly.

GOSPEL John 12:20-33

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

Some Greeks who had come to worship at the Passover Feast  
came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee,  
and asked him, "Sir, we would like to see Jesus." »

Bethsaida = beth-SAY-un-duh  
Imagine you are asking someone to see  
Jesus. Who in your life would have taken  
you to meet him?

READING II  
The Letter to the Hebrews consistently appeals to the priestly sacrificial system of the old covenant to understand Christ's life, death, and resurrection. With this sacrificial system as an interpretive key, Hebrews presents Christ's entire life as a salvific offering to God on our behalf. Today's passage highlights some key elements of that offering. First, it speaks of Christ's "prayers and supplications" and "loud cries and tears" as offerings for our sake. The picture of Christ's prayer here is one of strenuous, heartfelt piety. As Hebrews claims, Christ's prayers were heard because they were uttered in heartfelt reverence or what we might call cautious piety (*eulabeia* in Greek). That is, Christ's mode of prayer, according to Hebrews, was rooted in an interpretation of the Lord. His every act, an appeal to God was understood as a daring appeal to the truly almighty one. The focus of the passage then shifts to Christ's suffering and obedience to the Father. With the Lord's sacrifice on the cross in view, the passage from Hebrews closes by indicating that Christ's passion is the source and cost of our eternal salvation. Made perfect through suffering, "he who obey him." Thus, as we get closer to Holy Week, we are reminded of its meaning—Jesus' sacrifice is our salvation.

now would seemingly reject its terms in order to reestablish a relationship with a disloyal people? Recognizing God's profound love for the chosen people cannot negate God's justice; God's forgiveness of the people entails a cost on God's part. That cost comes into view in the subsequent readings.

Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me. "I am troubled now. Yet what should I say, Father, save me from this hour?" But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it and will glorify it again." The crowd there heard it and said it was thunder; but others said, "An angel has spoken to him." Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come for my sake but for yours. Now is the time of judgment on this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself." He said this indicating the kind of death he would die.

some Greeks and through disciples with Greek names, symbolizes that the nations of the world now want to see Jesus. So, the time is ripe. The world desires him. His mission is fulfilled. "The hour has come," it is time for him to be glorified by losing his life and making of himself an offering for others. By committing to such self-sacrifice, Christ presents himself as a model for his disciples. At the same time, he reveals the Father to the surrounding crowd by taking up a prayerful conversation in which the Father mysteriously responds. The crowd, however, remains confused, thinking they request to see Jesus, which comes from mental transition in Jesus' mission. The inconspicuous request sparks a fundamentally innocent and resurrection, a seeming passion and resurrection, a seeming passage and resurrection (the Last Supper and the events leading up to today's Gospel passage and the importance of the richness of the events leading up to today's Gospel and his glorification begins. public ministry dramatically concludes in received by a crowd in Jerusalem, Jesus' ministry dramatically concludes in preparation for death, and triumphantly in capital crimes by religious leaders, appointed threatened with arrest for Greek names, symbolizes that the nations Jesus clarifies. His self-offering on the cross will result in judgement of the world and its ruler, and Jesus will draw everyone to himself. Thus, with our Lenten campaign drawing to a close and Holy Week around the corner, we ponder this week the approach of Christ's glorification on the cross, how it reveals the Father, how it introduces the prospect of final judgment and justice, and how it gathers the nations to God. E.W.

GOSPEL

"Everyone" will be drawn to Jesus. His words are not only meant for those gathered around him but also for us who hear his word today.

Explain the misunderstanding of the crowd using a narrator voice.

Bring emotion to the dialogue. Jesus' humanity is seen in his "troubled" state.

Emphasize the contrasts: love / hate and loses / preserves.

"Son of Man" was a Jewish idiom. Read it as one term. The agrarian community would understand this metaphor.