

Sunday, January 2, 2022 – Second Sunday after Christmas

First Reading: Jeremiah 31:7-14

The first three verses of this passage were the First Reading for October 24. Here are some of the things that I said at that time.

31: 7-8 - Thus says the LORD: See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor, together.

31: 9 - With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back, I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

But sometimes we have to wait. When have you had to wait?

Jeremiah 29 -

29: 7 - Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

29: 10 - Only when Babylon's seventy years are completed will I visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place.

29: 11 - For surely I know the plans I have for you, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.

31: 10 - Hear the word of the Lord, O nations. He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd a flock.

31: 11 - The LORD has redeemed Jacob from hands too strong for him.

When has God rescued you from something/someone who was too strong for you?

12 - Their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again.

13 - I will turn their mourning into joy, I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.

Psalm: Psalm 147:12-20

13 - The Lord has strengthened the bars of your gates and blessed your children within you.

14 - God has established peace on your borders and satisfies you with the finest wheat.

16 - God gives snow like wool.

17 - God scatters hail like bread crumbs. Who can stand against God's cold?

18 - The LORD sends forth the word and melts them.

Second Reading: Ephesians 1:3-14

3 - Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

4 - He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love.

5 - He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will.

7-8 - In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us.

9-10 - He has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

Galatians 4: 4 – When the fullness of time had come, God sent His Son.

Notice the pronouns – we – you also – our.

12-14 – We were the first to set our hope on Christ. In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

Gospel: John 1: 1-18

Matthew and Luke tell the story of the birth of Jesus, but give different details.

Mark starts with Jesus full grown, as He begins His public ministry at the age of thirty.

John speaks of Jesus as having existed before creation.

1-3 - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being.

Cf. Genesis 1: 1

3-5 - What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

10-11 - He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him.

12-13 - But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

14 - The Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

16 - From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

Response to sermon on the wedding at Cana in Galilee – "180 Gallons of Grace"

18 - No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

John 14: 8 – Philip to Jesus – "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied."