

**FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT
YEAR B**

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

God,
who made us
and gives us life,
your Son, Jesus,
came among us
to raise the dead
from their graves
and give us all a life
that will never end.
We love you for this
and pray to you
that we will have that life,
and so live with you,
and Jesus,
and the Holy Spirit,
forever and ever.

FOCUS OF THE READINGS:

We live in a world broken by exaggerated individualism and personal gain. We have fallen into this trap and have sinned.

Our first reading assures us that although we "broke the covenant," God takes us back, forgives our sin, and starts anew with us. We hear the consoling words again, "I will be their God and they will be my people." The Gospel calls us to live as God's people by dying to our selfishness and living for others. This is our baptismal covenant and, like Jesus, our true life comes from living with and for others. In him, we too must face the paradox of the cross: we too must die and be raised to new life.

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 31:31-34

This is a reading from the prophet Jeremiah.

God said:

I am going to make a new covenant
with my people.

It will not be like the covenant
I made with their ancestors long ago
when I brought them away from Egypt.
My people broke that covenant.

But this is the new covenant
I am making with my people now.
I will place my law within their hearts.

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

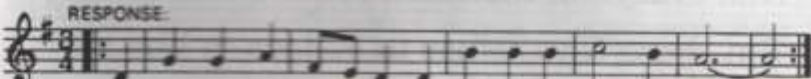
Everyone, from the smallest to the greatest,
will know me.

I will forgive all the wrong they have done
and I will forgive all their sin.

This is the Word of God.

RESPONSE: Psalm 89

RESPONSE

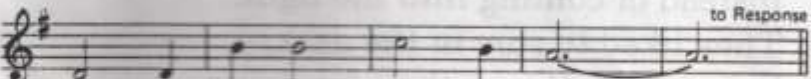


Your love and your prom-is-es are true, O my God, are true! —

VERSES



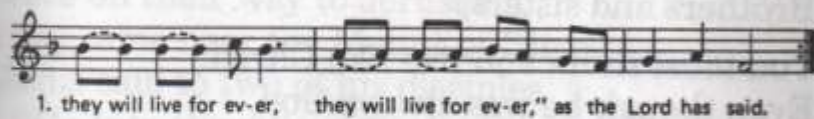
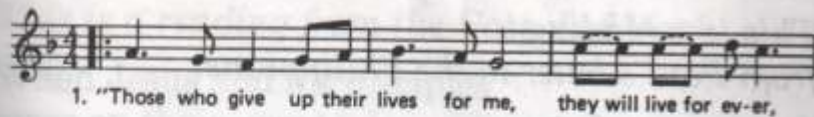
1. You made a cov - e - nant _____ long a -
2. You keep your prom - is - es for ev -



1. go. a prom - ise made in love. _____
2. er. Your love will nev - er end. _____

to Response

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:



GOSPEL: *John 12:24-25, 32-33*

This is a reading from the Gospel of John.

Jesus said to Philip and Andrew,

"You know that if you do not bury
a grain of wheat,
it stays just one grain of wheat.
But if you bury it in the ground,
it grows and becomes many grains.

"In the same way,
those who try to hold on to their lives
will lose them.
But those who are willing
to give up their lives
will live forever.

"And when I am lifted up,
I will bring all people to me."

When he said this,
Jesus was telling them
how he was going to die.

This is the Good News of the Lord.

REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH CHILDREN:

Before the first reading, ask the children if they remember what the word "covenant" means. We heard it the first Sunday of Lent. Ask them if they remember what "sign" God gave us as a reminder of the covenant. They didn't keep their side of it. Invite them to listen as we hear about a new covenant that God will make.

After the first reading, ask the children what they heard God say about this new covenant.

- Where will it be written?
- What do you think that means?
- What does God promise in this covenant?

Help the children verbalize: "I will be your God and you will be my people."

After the Gospel, ask the children if they have ever planted a seed or watched someone plant seeds.

- What happens after some time?
- What would happen if you left the seed in the package or on a shelf?
- Would it grow?
- Why not?

Ask the children what Jesus said about the "grain of wheat." Explain to them that the grain is the seed for the plant.

- What does Jesus mean when he says we must be willing to give up our lives?

• *Note: It is important that the children understand that this is an image. The seed does not actually die, it appears to die. Jesus is not asking us to die physically for others, at least not usually. We are asked to put the wants and needs of others before our own.*

- How is that like the grain of wheat?

You may wish to plant some seeds that will come up within two weeks.

