

YEAR 1, LENT 4, MONDAY: MORNING PRAYER

The First Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from the Book of Jeremiah

The word of the Lord came to me: “When you tell this people all these words, and they say to you, ‘Why has the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us? What is our iniquity? What is the sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?’ then you shall say to them: ‘Because your fathers have forsaken me, says the LORD, and have gone after other gods and have served and worshiped them, and have forsaken me and have not kept my law, and because you have done worse than your fathers, for behold, every one of you follows his stubborn evil will, refusing to listen to me; therefore I will hurl you out of this land into a land which neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you shall serve other gods day and night, for I will show you no favor.’ Therefore, behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when it shall no longer be said, ‘As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,’ but ‘As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them.’ For I will bring them back to their

own land which I gave to their fathers. Behold, I am sending for many fishers, says the LORD, and they shall catch them; and afterwards I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain and every hill, and out of the clefts of the rocks. For my eyes are upon all their ways; they are not hid from me, nor is their iniquity concealed from my eyes. And I will doubly recompense their iniquity and their sin, because they have polluted my land with the carcasses of their detestable idols, and have filled my inheritance with their abominations.” O LORD, my strength and my stronghold, my refuge in the day of trouble, to thee shall the nations come from the ends of the earth and say: “Our fathers have inherited nought but lies, worthless things in which there is no profit. Can man make for himself gods? Such are no gods!” “Therefore, behold, I will make them know, this once I will make them know my power and my might, and they shall know that my name is the LORD.”

The Reader concludes The Word of the Lord.

The Second Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans

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 a married woman is bound by law 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 which 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.

The Reader concludes The Word of the Lord.