

JUNE 21ST, 2026
4TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

FIRST READING JEREMIAH 20:7-13

Jeremiah accuses God of forcing him into a ministry that brings him only contempt and persecution. Yet Jeremiah is confident that God will be a strong protector against his enemies and commits his life into God's hands.

⁷ O Lord, you have enticed me,
and I was enticed;
you have overpowered me,
and you have prevailed.
I have become a laughingstock all day long;
everyone mocks me.
⁸ For whenever I speak, I must cry out;
I must shout, "Violence and destruction!"
For the word of the Lord has become for me
a reproach and derision all day long.
⁹ If I say, "I will not mention him
or speak any more in his name,"
then within me there is something like a burning fire
shut up in my bones;
I am weary with holding it in,
and I cannot.
¹⁰ For I hear many whispering:
"Terror is all around!
Denounce him! Let us denounce him!"
All my close friends
are watching for me to stumble.
"Perhaps he can be enticed,
and we can prevail against him
and take our revenge on him."
¹¹ But the Lord is with me like a terrifying warrior;
therefore my persecutors will stumble,
and they will not prevail.
They will be greatly shamed,
for they will not succeed.

Their eternal dishonor
will never be forgotten.

¹² O Lord of hosts, you test the righteous;
you see the heart and the mind;
let me see your retribution upon them,
for to you I have committed my cause.

¹³ Sing to the Lord;
praise the Lord!
For he has delivered the life of the needy
from the hands of evildoers.

PSALM 69:7-18

⁷ Surely, for your sake I have suf- | fered reproach,
and shame has cov- | ered my face.

⁸ **I have become a stranger to | my own kindred,
an alien to my | mother's children.**

⁹ Zeal for your house has eat- | en me up;
the scorn of those who scorn you has fall- | en upon me.

¹⁰ **I humbled my- | self with fasting,
but that was turned to | my reproach.**

¹¹ I put on | sackcloth also,
and became a by- | word among them.

¹² **Those who sit at the gate mur- | mur against me,
and the drunkards make | songs about me.**

¹³ But as for me, this is my prayer to you, at the time you have | set, O Lord:
“In your great mercy, O God, answer me with your un- | failing help.

¹⁴ **Save me from the mire; do not | let me sink;
let me be rescued from those who hate me and out of | the deep
waters.**

¹⁵ Let not the torrent of waters wash over me, neither let the deep swal- | low
me up;

do not let the pit shut its | mouth upon me.

¹⁶ **Answer me, O Lord, for your | love is kind;
in your great compassion, | turn to me.**

¹⁷ Hide not your face | from your servant;
be swift and answer me, for I am | in distress.

¹⁸ **Draw near to me and redeem me;
because of my enemies deliver me.**

SECOND READING: ROMANS 6:1b-11

In baptism we were incorporated into the reality of Christ's death and resurrection. We have been made new in Christ through his death and resurrection to live freed from sin. Here is the reading:

^{1b} Should we continue in sin in order that grace may increase? ² By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? ³ Do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.

⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, so we might no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For whoever has died is freed from sin. ⁸ But if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰ The death he died, he died to sin once for all, but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

GOSPEL READING: MATTHEW 10:24-39

[Jesus said to the twelve:] ²⁴ "A disciple is not above the teacher nor a slave above the master; ²⁵ it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

²⁶ "So have no fear of them, for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered and nothing secret that will not become known. ²⁷ What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. ²⁸ Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather, fear the one who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. ³⁰ And even the hairs of your head are all counted. ³¹ So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

³² "Everyone, therefore, who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven, ³³ but whoever denies me before

others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

³⁴ “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace but a sword.

³⁵ For I have come to set a man against his father,
and a daughter against her mother,
and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law,

³⁶ and one's foes will be members of one's own household.

³⁷ “Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me, ³⁸ and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.”

Prayers of the People

L: Gathered together by the Holy Spirit, let us pray for the church and the needs of the world saying *God of grace* and responding *hear our prayer*.

A brief silence.

Life-giving God, you have called your people to lose their lives for Jesus' sake. Strengthen your church to follow you in the face of difficulty. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Creator God, you know every sparrow that falls to the ground. Protect migrating birds, endangered species, and their natural habitats. Empower us to care for your creation. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Sustaining God, you promise to provide for us. Help those living with disability. Comfort those experiencing any sort of illness or suffering. Especially for Jose, Joan, Terri, Martha, Tim, Alfred, Terry, Eleanor, Abdulaziz, Meryem, Aysa, Hasan, Alma, Sylvia, George, Harold, Orville, Byron, the friends and family of Bea and all those we carry in our hearts and minds this day, silently or named aloud at this time... (brief pause). God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of the widows and orphans, the immigrants and refugees, give strength to those who today are fleeing their homes and lands, resilience to

those displaced and living in refugee camps, peace to those seeking healing for trauma, and courage to the countless humanitarian workers who provide shelter, care, medical aid and support. Open our hearts and minds to see what you see, to love as you love and to give as you have given so that your promised justice would become reality in our world. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

We give thanks especially today for those who nurture and support, and strive to set a positive example. We know that you bless us with family in many shapes and forms and we see examples of love all around. For some, today is a celebration, but we regret that for some, this day is challenging. Be with those who have lost their fathers, whose fathers were abusive or absent, for those who struggle with a sense of family. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Trusting you receive all our prayers, we commend our spoken and unspoken prayers to you, O God, through Jesus our Savior. **Amen.**