

32<sup>nd</sup> Sunday  
in Ordinary  
Time

# Sunday Bulletin

Year C

## Entrance Antiphon † Ps 88 (87): 3

Let my prayer come into your  
presence. Incline your ear to my  
cry for help, O Lord.

## First Reading † 2 Maccabees 7:1-2, 9-14

*The king of the world will receive  
us into life eternal at the  
resurrection.*

There were seven brothers  
who were arrested with their  
mother. The king tried to force  
them to taste pig's flesh, which  
the Law forbids, by torturing  
them with whips and scourges.  
One of them, acting as  
spokesman for the others, said,  
'What are you trying to find out  
from us? We are prepared to die  
rather than break the Law of  
our ancestors.'

With his last breath the second  
brother exclaimed, 'Inhuman  
fiend, you may discharge us  
from this present life, but the  
King of the world will raise us  
up, since it is for his laws that  
we die, to live again for ever.'

After him, they amused  
themselves with the third, who  
on being asked for his tongue  
promptly thrust it out and  
boldly held out his hands, with  
these honourable words, 'It was  
heaven that gave me these  
limbs; for the sake of his laws I

## Communion Antiphon † Psalm 23(22): 1-2

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want. Fresh and green are the  
pastures where he gives me repose, near restful waters he leads me.

## Commentary (continued).

with the Maccabean martyrdom, as both are inspired by a hope in God's justice and the resurrection. We observe a formal similarity between the story the Sadducees tell, and the account from Maccabees in the First Reading. In both cases, we have the deaths of seven sons in succession, all of whom die childless, followed by the death of a woman. It is a truly pathetic situation: how can God's mercy and justice possibly be experienced for such a large family that nonetheless finds itself completely annihilated? Jesus first points out that the Sadducees know little or nothing about the nature of the life to come, in which there will be neither marriage nor childbirth, but eternal life like the angels. Jesus' teaching here has indirect application to the celibate vocation in the Church. Those who choose celibacy for the sake of the kingdom – a lifestyle Jesus himself practiced and commended to others (Matt 19:12) – are choosing already in this life to live in the manner of the angels and the life to come. So celibacy is a "sign of contradiction": it contradicts the worldview of the rest of society. It makes no sense in a secular worldview. If there is no resurrection and eternal life, celibacy is nonsensical. Therefore it is a lifestyle that gives witness to a hope in the world to come. Perhaps this is why so many people, even non-Catholics, experience profound comfort by the sight or presence of women religious in habits. Mother Miriam of the Lamb of God (Rosalind Moss), a Jewish convert who started a women's religious order, tells the story of a man she ran into at the grocery store in Brooklyn who was moved to tears at the sight of her habit, because it reminded him of his childhood, when nuns were everywhere. The man was a Methodist. But he missed the nuns badly: "Where have you been?!" he asked Mother Miriam emphatically. Religious women are sign of hope that there is something more than this sex-drugs-and-violence saturated culture, there is hope for a world to come.



*The Martyrdom of the Seven  
Maccabees, Antonio Ciseri, 1863, Oil  
on Canvas, St Felicità, Florence,  
Italy.*

disdain them; from him I hope to receive them again.' The king and his attendants were astounded at the young man's courage and his utter indifference to suffering.

When this one was dead they subjected the fourth to the same savage torture. When he neared his end he cried, 'Ours is the better choice, to meet death at men's hands, yet relying on God's promise that we shall be raised up by him; whereas for you there can be no resurrection, no new life.'

*The word of the Lord.*

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Responsorial Psalm ‡ Psalm 16:1, 5-6, 8, 15.**

#### **R. Lord, when your glory appears, my joy will be full.**

Lord, hear a cause that is just,  
pay heed to my cry.  
Turn your ear to my prayer:  
no deceit is on my lips. **R.**

I kept my feet firmly in your paths;  
there was no faltering in my steps.  
I am here and I call, you will hear me, O God.  
Turn your ear to me; hear my words. **R.**

Guard me as the apple of your eye.  
Hide me in the shadow of your wings.  
As for me, in my justice I shall see your face  
and be filled, when I awake, with the sight of your glory. **R.**

### **Second Reading ‡ 2 Thessalonians 2:16-3:5**

*May the Lord strengthen you in everything good that you do or say.*

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father who has given us his love and, through his grace, such inexhaustible comfort and such sure hope, comfort you and strengthen you in everything good that you do or say.

Finally, brothers, pray for us; pray that the Lord's message may spread quickly, and be received with honour as it was among you; and pray that we may be preserved from the interference of bigoted and evil people, for faith is not given to everyone. But the Lord is faithful, and he will give you strength and guard you from the evil one, and we, in the Lord, have every confidence that you are doing and will go on doing all that we tell you. May the Lord turn your hearts towards the love of God and the fortitude of Christ.

*The word of the Lord.*

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Gospel Acclamation ‡ Revelation 1:5, 6.**

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

Jesus Christ is the firstborn of the dead;  
glory and kingship be his for ever and ever.

**Alleluia!**

### **Gospel ‡ Luke 20:27-38**

*He is not a God of the dead but of the living.*

Some Sadducees — those who say that there is no resurrection — approached Jesus and they put this question to him, 'Master, we have it from Moses in writing, that if a man's married brother dies childless, the man must marry the widow to raise up children for his brother. Well, then, there were seven brothers. The first, having married a wife, died childless. The second and then the third married the widow. And the same with all seven, they died leaving no children. Finally the woman herself died. Now, at the resurrection, to which of them will she be wife since she had been married to all seven?' Jesus replied, 'The children of this world take wives and husbands, but those who are judged worthy of a place in the other world and in the resurrection from the dead do not marry because they can no longer die, for they are the same as the angels, and being children of the resurrection they are sons of God. And Moses himself implies that the dead rise again, in the passage about the bush where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. Now he is God, not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all men are in fact alive.'

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!**

### **Commentary on the Gospel by John Bergsma, extract from**

<http://www.thesacredpage.com/2013/11/hope-for-hopeless-world-32nd-sunday-in.html#more>.

For the first time in its history, the Jewish nation in the period of the Maccabees faced persecution and death, not for political or ethnic reasons, but for their religion per se. Modern Judaism continues to see in the Maccabean martyrs the beginning of the Jewish theology of martyrdom. In particular, Judaism correlates Abraham and Isaac's ordeal at the Aqedah (Genesis 22:1-18) with the suffering of the Maccabean mother and her sons in 2 Maccabees 7. In fact, the Maccabean mother is seen as surpassing Abraham in faith, since she gave seven sons and herself to death, whereas Abraham offered but one son and received him back alive. In this way, the Maccabean mother is a prototype and model for all subsequent Jews martyred for their faith.

Through faith in the Jewish Messiah, Jesus Christ the Son of David, the community gathered around him (the *ekklesia*) constitutes the "Israel of God" (Gal 6:16; cf. Rom 2:28-29) and understands the righteous Jewish martyrs such as the pious Sabbath-keepers (1 Macc 2:29-38), Eleazar, and the mother and seven sons to be the Church's true spiritual ancestors. Christian persecution and martyrdom — such as that of Christ himself, as well as the early saints Stephen, Paul, and many others — is in continuity (Continued next page.)