

Introductions to the Readings – July 2010

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, July 4

First Reading: Isaiah 66: 10-14

The last part of the book of Isaiah contains the words of a prophet who lived after the Jews returned from exile. In today's reading (which is a poem), the prophet sees a bright future for Jerusalem, and uses the image of God as a mother.

Second Reading: Galatians 6: 14-18

In Galatia, a group of Christians attacked Paul's credentials as an apostle and accused him of false teaching because he said people can be saved without abiding by Jewish law. In this passage from the end of his letter to the Galatians, Paul defends his right to teach, and stresses that faith in the law has been replaced by faith in Jesus.

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, July 11

First Reading: Deuteronomy 30: 10-14

The events in this reading take place as the Israelites are camped on the shore of the Jordan River, ready to enter the Promised Land. Moses makes it clear to the people that they are expected to remain faithful to the Lord after they have settled in their new land.

Second Reading: Colossians 1: 15-20

Today and for three more Sundays, the second reading will be from the letter to the Colossians. This letter responds to a widespread belief that God ruled the world through the mediation of angels who were given their own powers. The author quotes an early Christian hymn that emphasizes that Jesus is the one and only mediator between God and the world.

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, July 18

First Reading: Genesis 18: 1-10

Chapters 12 to 25 of Genesis contain narratives about Abraham and Sarah, our father and mother in faith. Today the couple is visited by mysterious messengers from God. With customary Middle-Eastern hospitality, Abraham and Sarah welcome and lavishly feed the visitors who, in turn, promise something wonderful.

Second Reading: Colossians 1: 24-28

The letter to the Colossians was written around 80 A.D. to Christians who lived at Colossae, a city in what is today Turkey. A major emphasis of this letter is that Christ is the source of every grace and blessing that comes to human beings.

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, July 25

First Reading: Genesis 18: 20-32

Today's passage from Genesis is another episode from the life Abraham, our father in faith. He lived near Sodom, a city notorious for its wickedness. In this passage, Abraham employs the Middle-Eastern technique of bartering to negotiate with God over the future of that city.

Second Reading: Colossians 2: 12-14

This week we continue our series of four readings from the letter to the Colossians. We have seen how this letter emphasizes Christ as the sole mediator between God and all creation. Today's passage speaks of how we become one with Christ.