

HOLY FAMILY, Year B

First Reading † Genesis 15:1-6, 21:1-3

Your own son shall be your heir.

A reading from the book of Genesis

Some time later, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision:

‘Do not be afraid, Abram!
I am a shield to you,
and will give you a very great reward.’

Abram replied,

‘Lord God, what are you giving to me?
I go my way childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus.’

Abram continued,

‘Look, you have given me no offspring, and see, a member of my household will be my heir.’

Then the Lord’s word came to him saying,

‘This man will not be your heir; no, the issue of your own body shall be your heir.’

Then taking him outside, he said,

‘Look up at the sky and count the stars if you can. Just so will your descendants be,’

he told him. Abram put his faith in the Lord and this was reckoned to him as righteousness.

The Lord treated Sarah as he had said, and did what he had promised her. Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the time God had promised.

Abraham named the son born to him Isaac, the son to whom Sarah had given birth.

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial † Psalm 104:1-6,8-9

The Lord remembers his covenant for ever.

Give thanks to the Lord; proclaim his name.
Make known his deeds among the peoples.
O sing to him, sing his praise;
tell all his wonderful works!

The Lord remembers his covenant for ever.

Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts that seek the Lord rejoice.
Turn to the Lord and his strength;
constantly seek his face.

The Lord remembers his covenant for ever.

Remember the wonders he has done,
his marvels and his words of judgement.
O children of Abraham, his servant,
O descendants of the Jacob he chose.

The Lord remembers his covenant for ever.

He remembers his covenant for ever:
that he promised for a thousand generations,
the covenant he made with Abraham,
the oath he swore to Isaac.

The Lord remembers his covenant for ever.

Second Reading † Hebrews 11:8,11-12,17-19

The faith of Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac.

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

In faith Abraham obeyed the call to *set out* for a place which he was to receive as an inheritance, and *he set out* without knowing where he was going.

In faith Sarah also, in spite of being barren and beyond the age of conception, was made able to receive the seed to bear a child, because she believed that he who had made the promise was faithful. Because of this, from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants *as numerous as the stars of heaven and the grains of sand on the seashore which cannot be counted.*

By faith Abraham, *when put to the test, offered up Isaac.* Although he was waiting to receive the promise he was prepared to sacrifice his only son, of whom he had been told: *through Isaac will your name be carried on.* He reckoned that God had the power even to raise the dead, and from there, figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back.

The word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation † Colossians 3:15,16

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

In the past God spoke to our fathers through the prophets;
now he speaks to us through his Son.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Gospel [longer form] † Luke 2:22-40

The child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

And when the days were complete for them to be purified in keeping with the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord – as it is written in the Law of the Lord: *Every first-born male shall be called holy to the Lord* – and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is prescribed in the Law of the Lord, *a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.*

Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was a righteous and devout man, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had seen the Christ of the Lord. Prompted by the Spirit he came into the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, Simeon himself took him into his arms and blessed God and said:

*Now, Master, you are letting your servant
go in peace according to your word;
for my eyes have seen your salvation
which you have made ready in the presence of all nations;
a light for revelation to the gentiles
and for the glory of your people Israel.*

As the child's father and mother were wondering at the things that were being said about him, Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother,

'Look, he is destined for the fall and for the rise of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is opposed – and a sword will pierce your soul too – so that the thoughts of many may be laid bare.'

There was a prophetess, too, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the Temple, worshipping night and day with fasting and prayer. She came up just at that moment and began to praise God; and to speak about the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem.

When they had completed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom, and God's favour was on him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Gospel [shorter form] † Luke 2:22,39-40

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

The child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom.

And when the days were complete for them to be purified in keeping with the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.

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The Gospel of the Lord.

*27 December — St John, Apostle, Evangelist | 28 December — Holy Innocents
29 December — Fifth day in the octave of Christmas | 30 December — Sixth day in the octave of Christmas |
31 December — Seventh day in the octave of Christmas
1 January —
Octave day of the Nativity of the Lord
Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God*