

A Reading from the Book of Genesis.

(Genesis 15:1 -6)

After this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision:

"Do not be afraid, Abram.

I am your shield,
your very great reward."

2 But Abram said, "Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?" **3** And Abram said, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir."

4 Then the word of the Lord came to him: "This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir." **5** He took him outside and said, "Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be."

6 Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

The Word of the Lord.

Please join in saying today's psalm.
(Psalm 50: 1-8, 23-24)

- 1 The L ORD, the God of gods, has spoken; *
he has called the earth from the rising of the sun to
its setting.
- 2 Out of Zion, perfect in its beauty, *
God reveals himself in glory.
- 3 Our God will come and will not keep silence; *
before him there is a consuming flame,
and round about him a raging storm.
- 4 He calls the heavens and the earth from above *
to witness the judgment of his people.
- 5 "Gather before me my loyal followers, *
those who have made a covenant with me
and sealed it with sacrifice."
- 6 Let the heavens declare the rightness of his cause; *
for God himself is judge.
- 7 Hear, O my people, and I will speak:
"O Israel, I will bear witness against you; *
for I am God, your God.
- 8 I do not accuse you because of your sacrifices; *
your offerings are always before me.
- 23 Consider this well, you who forget God, *
lest I rend you and there be none to deliver you.
- 24 Whoever offers me the sacrifice of thanksgiving
honors me; *
but to those who keep in my way will I show
the salvation of God."

A Reading from the Letter to the Hebrews.

(Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16)

¹ Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.² This is what the ancients were commended for.³ By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

⁸ By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. ⁹ By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise.¹⁰ For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.¹¹ By faith Abraham, even though he was past age--and Sarah herself was barren--was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise. ¹² And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.¹³ All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth.¹⁴ People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own.¹⁵ If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return.¹⁶ Instead, they were longing for a better country--a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

The Word of the Lord.

**The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to
Luke.**

(Luke 12:32-40)

³²"Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.³³Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.³⁴For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

³⁵"Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning,³⁶like men waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him.³⁷It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them.³⁸It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the second or third watch of the night.³⁹But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into.⁴⁰You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him."

The Gospel of the Lord.