Genesis 37:1-4,12-28

Jacob settled in the land where his father had lived as an alien, the land of Canaan. This is the story of the family of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was shepherding the flock with his brothers; he was a helper to the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father’s wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father. Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his children, because he was the son of his old age; and he had made him a long robe with sleeves. But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him. Now his brothers went to pasture their father’s flock near Shechem. And Israel said to Joseph, “Are not your brothers pasturing the flock at Shechem? Come, I will send you to them.” He answered, “Here I am.” So he said to him, “Go now, see if it is well with your brothers and with the flock; and bring word back to me.” So he sent him from the valley of Hebron. He came to Shechem, and a man found him wandering in the fields; the man asked him, “What are you seeking?” “I am seeking my brothers,” he said; “tell me, please, where they are pasturing the flock.” The man said, “They have gone away, for I heard them say, ‘Let us go to Dothan.’” So Joseph went after his brothers, and found them at Dothan. They saw him from a distance, and before he came near to them, they conspired to kill him. They said to one another, “Here comes this dreamer. Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits; then we shall say that a wild animal has devoured him, and we shall see what will become of his dreams.” But when Reuben heard it, he delivered him out of their hands, saying, “Let us not take his life.” Reuben said to them, “Shed no blood; throw him into this pit here in the wilderness, but lay no hand on him”—that he might rescue him out of their hand and restore him to his father. So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the long robe with sleeves that he wore; and they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it. Then they sat down to eat; and looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels carrying gum, balm, and resin, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. Then Judah said to his brothers, “What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and not lay our hands on him, for he is our brother, our own flesh.” And his brothers agreed. When some Midianite traders passed by, they drew Joseph up, lifting him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.

Psalm 105:1-6,16-22,45b

1 Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his Name; \*

make known his deeds among the peoples.

2 Sing to him, sing praises to him, \*

and speak of all his marvelous works.

3 Glory in his holy Name; \*

let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.

4 Search for the Lord and his strength; \*

continually seek his face.

5 Remember the marvels he has done, \*

his wonders and the judgments of his mouth,

6 O offspring of Abraham his servant, \*

O children of Jacob his chosen.

16 Then he called for a famine in the land \*

and destroyed the supply of bread.

17 He sent a man before them, \*

Joseph, who was sold as a slave.

18 They bruised his feet in fetters; \*

his neck they put in an iron collar.

19 Until his prediction came to pass, \*

the word of the Lord tested him.

20 The king sent and released him; \*

the ruler of the peoples set him free.

21 He set him as a master over his household,

as a ruler over all his possessions,

22 To instruct his princes according to his will

and to teach his elders wisdom.

45 Hallelujah!

Romans 10:5-15

Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that “the person who does these things will live by them.” But the righteousness that comes from faith says, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’” (that is, to bring Christ down) “or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? “The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. The scripture says, “No one who believes in him will be put to shame.” For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

Matthew 14:22-33

Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, “Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.” Peter answered him, “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.” He said, “Come.” So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!” Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?” When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”

Welcome to our parish. In today’s liturgy, water is a major symbol. The Gospel reading from Matthew is the account of Peter’s attempt to join Christ in walking on the Sea of Galilee. As Peter’s faith fails and he begins to sink below the waters, he cries to the Lord for help and Jesus rescues him.

*[Using Genesis]* Today we move ahead in the story of God’s ancient people to the sons of Jacob (now called Israel). The older sons, jealous of Joseph—who is their father’s favorite—sold him into slavery in Egypt, telling their father a lion killed him. Their intention was to get rid of Joseph; God used their action, though, to save the family, as we will see in a few weeks, and ultimately to lead the descendants of all twelve brothers into freedom from Egypt in the Exodus.

*[Using 1 Kings]* The Old Testament reading is the story of Elijah’s meeting with God in the eloquent silence that drowns out all other sounds. This famous story underlines the unexpectedness of our encounters with God. Like Peter, and Elijah, we need to be on our guard—God is about where we least expect it!

We also continue to read the Epistle to the Romans. In this part of Romans, Paul is dealing with his sorrow that many of his fellow Jews have not accepted Jesus as Christ but he does not believe that God has rejected them. All who turn to God in faith belong to God and there is no distinction, for all are one in Christ who have called on the name of the Lord.

Water in the scriptures is not only a symbol of life, but also a symbol of death. As Israel passed from death into new life at the Red Sea, so we gather as a community that has passed with Jesus from death into resurrection in the waters of baptism.

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**Grant to us, Lord, we pray, the spirit to think and do always those things that are right, that we, who cannot exist without you, may by you be enabled to live according to your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen****.*