



## Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast June 28, 2020

**Note on the Readings for the 4th Sunday After Pentecost:** while difficult to find a consistent theme across the readings, each deals in some way with the perennial and difficult issue of human identity in relationship with God. Below are some themes we find in this Sunday readings.

---

**Genesis 22:1-14:** This may be one of the most difficult passages in the Bible: God's request to Abraham to sacrifice Issac to prove his faith. God will discern whether Abraham trusts and obeys the Giver - God, or whether Abraham only cherishes and covets the gift, the birth of a son, Issac. There are three scenes and divine voices in this passage.



(1) Abraham is addressed by the abrupt voice of God (vs. 1-5). As soon as the voice finishes, Abraham acts in obedience without showing much anguish over this command! (2) Climbing the mountain, Abraham is interrupted by Issac's "voice of innocent pathos." (vs. 7-8) "The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Abraham said, "God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." (3) As Abraham's offering is about to be made, and Angel interrupts: "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do

anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." This is a voice of "stunning generosity." Abraham has answered all the voices that have put him, and Issac, at risk, showing us that faith can come in small, frightened moments.

**Psalm 13:** is a classical psalm of lament in three parts. The speaker first asks four questions beginning with "How long..." Next we find motivations for the entreaties: for instance, since the speaker is precious to God, God should intervene. The third part of the psalm, vs. 5-6, is the conclusion with an affirmation of faith. The psalm that began in suffering ends in joy and hope. We should notice that the pain and sorrow are not specified in the psalm, so that even as we read this today, we find the psalm fitting our needs!

**Romans 6:12-23:** In Romans we see how seriously Paul regards sin. Sin kills the soul; it is not simply what one does or fails to do. For Paul, sin is a power that exceeds the abilities of human beings to fight against with their own strength. Sin is a realm of power, more than capable of ensnaring and enslaving people. We can become "slaves in sin." Readers today may be offended by Paul's use of slavery language because slavery lies in our not-too-distant past. We hear a lot in the news about slavery, monuments and symbols of slavery in the United States. We know slavery means one master and total, blind obedience to that master. Slavery allows no other possibilities. Paul knew that truth about slavery. Paul lays out for us an understanding that only God is a match for the power of sin, and freedom from sin in the result of liberation by God. We do not earn or achieve eternal life, for that is a free gift bestowed only by God.

**Matthew 10:40-42:** These verses conclude Matthew chapter 10, a chapter where Jesus has called the apostles aside for some teaching prior to their mission. *Matthew does not say what or where the mission was to be. That opens for us the possibility that this omission can be read as a direct admonition for us!*

---

**We continue to pray for** ...the Raquette Lake Community working to prepare for the summer season and for a safe opening of the Chapel for the first service of the season next week.

May it be so. Amen!

Blessings, Vance

[www.raquetlakechapel.org](http://www.raquetlakechapel.org)

---