

FIRST READING Genesis 37.3-4, 12-end.

A reading from Genesis

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.
When Reuben returned to the pit
and saw that Joseph was not in the pit,
he tore his clothes.
He returned to his brothers,

and said, "The boy is gone; and I, where can I turn?"
Then they took Joseph's robe,
slaughtered a goat,
and dipped the robe in the blood.
They had the long robe with sleeves taken to their father,
and they said, "This we have found;
see now whether it is your son's robe or not."
He recognised it,
and said, "It is my son's robe!
A wild animal has devoured him;
Joseph is without doubt torn to pieces."
Then Jacob tore his garments,
and put sackcloth on his loins,
and mourned for his son many days.
All his sons and all his daughters sought to comfort him;
but he refused to be comforted,
and said, "No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning."
Thus his father bewailed him.
Meanwhile the Midianites had sold him – in Egypt – to Potiphar,
one of Pharaoh's officials,
the captain of the guard.

For the Word of the LORD

SECOND READING 1 Peter 2.16-end

A reading from the first letter of Peter

As servants of God, live as free people,
yet do not use your freedom as a pretext for evil.

Honour everyone.

Love the family of believers.

Fear God.

Honour the emperor.

Slaves, accept the authority of your masters with all deference,
not only those who are kind and gentle
but also those who are harsh.

For it is a credit to you if,
being aware of God,

you endure pain while suffering unjustly.

If you endure – when you are beaten for doing wrong,
what credit is that?

But if you endure – when you do right and suffer for it,
you have God's approval.

For to this you have been called,

because Christ also suffered for you,

leaving you an example,

so that you should follow in his steps.

"He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth."

When he was abused,

he did not return abuse;

when he suffered,

he did not threaten;

but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly.

He – himself – bore our sins in his body – on the cross,

so that, free from sins,

we might live for righteousness;

by his wounds you have been healed.

For you were going astray like sheep,

but now you have returned to the shepherd
and guardian of your souls.

For the Word of the LORD