

Lenten and Easter Bible Study



Feb 11

Feb 18

Feb 25

Mar 4

Mar 11

Mar 18

Mar 25

Let's start with a prayer

Holy Father,

Help us to submit ourselves more fully to Your divine will for our lives in our 40-day Lenten journey to repentance and spiritual cleansing in preparation for the celebration of Your Son's glorious Resurrection on Easter Sunday. We pray that this Lenten journey, Father, brings about a change in our lives that leaves us, at the end of the journey, more committed to our faith and less drawn to the attractions of this earthly existence. As we begin our study of Jesus' last journey to Jerusalem, help us, Lord, to follow in His footsteps by denying selfish worldly interests and by humbly showing our gratitude to You through acts of charity, self-sacrifice, and service to the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. We pray in the name of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

2nd Sunday in Lent Prayers



Collect:

O God, who have commanded us
to listen to your beloved Son,
be pleased, we pray,
to nourish us inwardly by your word,
that, with spiritual sight made pure,
we may rejoice to behold your glory.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your
Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the
unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Prayer over the people:

Bless your faithful, we pray, O Lord,
with a blessing that endures for ever,
and keep them faithful
to the Gospel of your Only Begotten Son,
so that they may always desire and at last
attain
that glory whose beauty he showed in
his own Body,
to the amazement of his Apostles.
Through Christ our Lord.

Scripture Reading:



First Sunday in Lent

Genesis 22.1-2, 9-13,15-18

Psalms 116. 10+16-17,18-19

Romans 8,31b-35,37

Mark 9. 2-10

Themes:

- **The Beloved Son**
- **Test of Faith**
- **Glory of God revealed in Jesus**





Covenant with Abraham

Test of Faith

Promise of God to Abraham

Covenant Sign:

- Circumcision

Genesis 22.1-2, 9-13, 15-18



God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!" And Abraham said, "Here I am."

God said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you."

When Abraham and Isaac came to the place that God had shown him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. He bound his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son.

Genesis 9:8-15...cont'd

But the Angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." The Angel said, "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."

Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son.

The Angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, "By myself I have sworn, says the Lord: Because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will indeed bless you, and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of their enemies, and by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves, because you have obeyed my voice."

Typology of the Passion of Christ

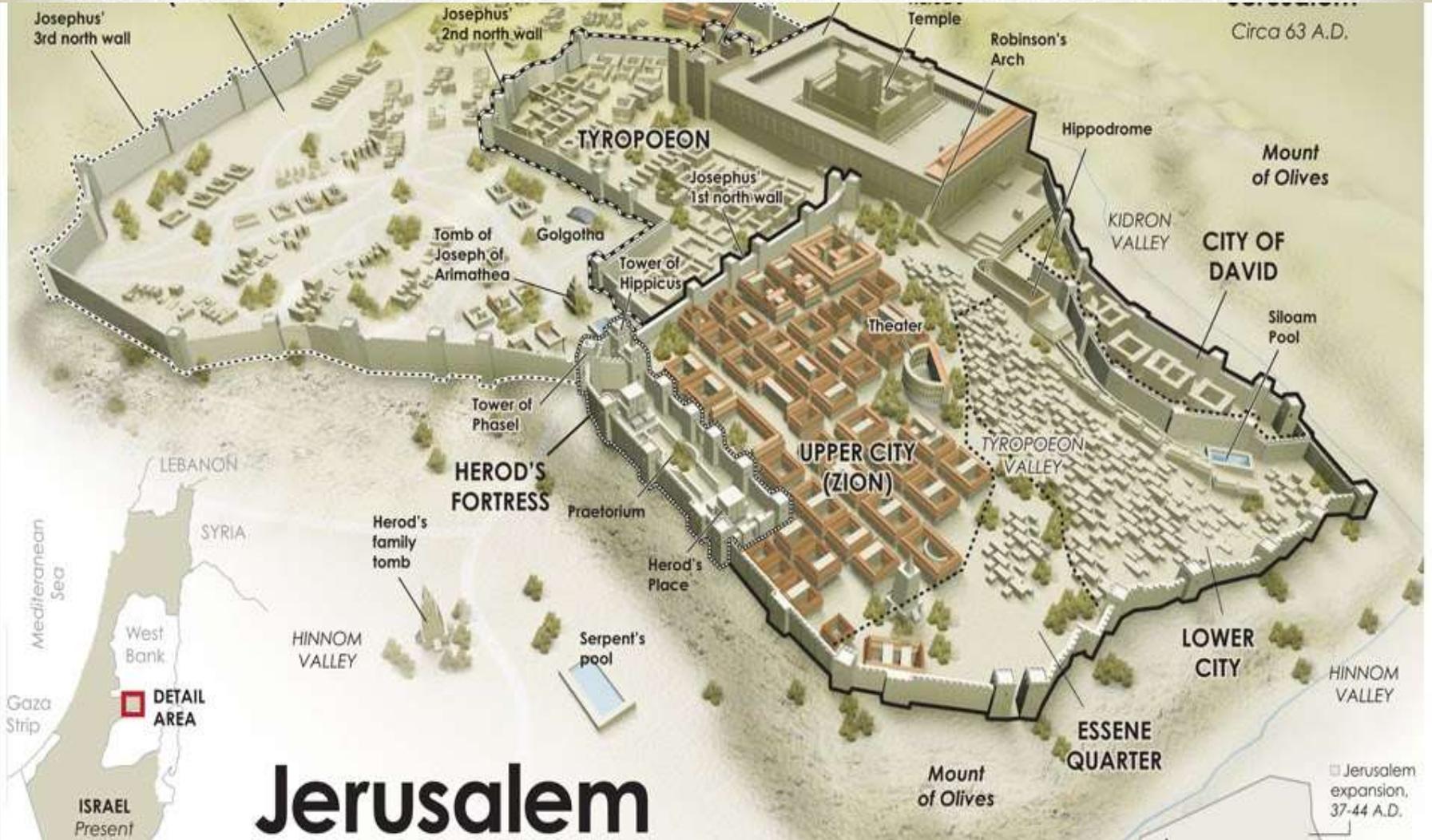
Abraham is asked to offer his only son.

Hebrew: "*akeidah*" which means the "binding" of Isaac.

God put Abraham to the test.

- These events were taking place about ten years or more after Ishmael's exile when Isaac was about 13 years old and can carry the wood for the sacrifice ([Gen 22:6](#)). . It was God's plan that Abraham should experience the test of a **covenant ordeal**.
- A covenant ordeal is a testing of the obedience and faith of a person in the special relationship of a covenant union with God. In Abraham's covenant ordeal, God tested his faith, trust, and obedience when He asked Abraham to sacrifice his son. It was also a covenant ordeal for Isaac who did not resist.
- Not intended as human sacrifice. [Human sacrifice, especially child sacrifice, was an abomination to God.]

Location: Mount Moriah



- God tested Abraham's faith, trust, and obedience when He asked Abraham to sacrifice his son. It was also a covenant ordeal for Isaac who did not resist.
- The first verse tells us God's intent in the covenant ordeal and that His purpose does not intend an actual human sacrifice.
- Human sacrifice, especially child sacrifice, was an abomination to God. It was widely practiced in parts of the Near East. Archaeological excavations in Canaanite cemeteries have found thousands of clay jars containing the bones of sacrificed children.
- There is a difference between Satan testing us and God testing us. Satan tests us to destroy us ([1 Chr 21:1](#); [Mt 4:1](#); [1 Pt 5:8](#); [Rom 6:23](#)). God never tempts us to do evil ([Sir 15:11-15](#); [Jm 1:13-15](#)). God only tests us to strengthen us and to give us the opportunity to prove ourselves worthy ([Ex 20:20](#); [Dt 8:2](#); [1 Kng 10:1](#); [1 Chr 29:17](#); [2 Chr 9:1](#); [Dan 1:12, 14](#); [Wis 3:1, 4-7](#); [1 Cor 10:13](#)).

- In their commentaries on this passage, the Fathers of the Church point out that when the Angel of Yahweh stopped Abraham and showed him the male lamb "caught up" (*sebeck* in Greek and *achaz* in Hebrew) in a tree to offer in sacrifice in place of the boy, Abraham realized that Yahweh had indeed provided the sacrifice.
- In that moment Abraham's son was given back to him on the third day after their journey of death had begun ([Gen 22:4](#)).

- This event as foreshadowed the Passion of the Christ who was also "caught up" on the tree of the Cross and was given back to the Father on the third day after His resurrection.
- Abraham's willingness to trust God with his life and the life of his son was not just belief; it was a work of faith. We are all called to "works of faith" in our journeys to salvation.
- St. James, in writing to the Church about the necessity of living and active faith, held Abraham up as an example of such faith: *Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You can see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by the works. Thus the scripture was fulfilled that says "Abraham believed in God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called "the friend of God" ([Jam 2:21-23](#)).*

Sacrifice of Isaac	Sacrifice of Jesus
Sacrifice to take away sins	Sacrifice to take away sins
Abraham's only son	God the Father's only Son
Rides a donkey to mountain of sacrifice	Rides a donkey into Jerusalem to die (Palm Sunday)
Isaac carries wood to the top of mountain	Jesus carries cross of wood to top of mountain
Sacrificed ram caught in thorns	Jesus crowned with thorns as He is crucified
Agrees to be sacrificed, does not resist	Agrees to be sacrificed, does not resist
Mt. Moriah outside city of Salem	Mt. Calvary (of the hills of Moriah) outside Jerusalem ("Jira"-Salem)
God will provide the lamb	Jesus is the "lamb of God"

Isaac / Jesus Typology



Psalm 116

One of the “Hallel” Psalms

[praise]

“I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD.”

Psalm 116: 10+15,16-17, 18-19



I kept my faith, even when I said, “I am greatly afflicted.” Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his faithful ones.

O Lord, I am your servant. You have loosed my bonds. I will offer to you a thanksgiving sacrifice and call on the name of the Lord.

I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people, in the courts of the house of the Lord, in your midst, O Jerusalem.

Psalm 116 Walking with the Lord

- Then in verses 15-19, the psalmist writes about how God watches over the lives of the righteous. Their deaths are a matter of significance because they are precious to God who accepts their deaths as a sacrificial offering.
- The psalmist sees himself as a "beloved son"/servant of the Lord God who has been raised to know and love God all his life from the teachings of his mother, the Lord's "handmaid." He expresses confidence that God watches over him.
- Even in times of distress, he attends worship in God's holy Temple.
- Despite his troubles, as a faithful son/servant of the Lord, he offers up a **sacrifice of thanksgiving** in the liturgy of communal worship as he fulfills his vows and praises the Lord. The responsorial phrase "I will walk before the Lord, in the land of the living" is from verse 9 and refers to the psalmist's **participation in Temple liturgy where he stands in the presence of God, which is a foretaste of heaven, the true "land of the living."** The phrase that is our response is an epithet association with worship in the Jerusalem Temple also found in [Psalms 27:13](#); [52:7](#) and [Isaiah 38:11](#).

Todah & The Eucharist



Todah = Thank offering
The Talmud records the ancient rabbis' teaching that, when the Messiah has come, "all sacrifices will cease except the Todah sacrifice. This will never cease in all eternity"

Chaburah Meal
A regular Jewish fellowship meal between members of a covenant family.

Hebrew = Chaburah
Greek = Koinonia
English = Communion

St. Paul's Letter to the Romans



Date: AD 57 or 58

Location: Corinth

Language: Greek



Romans 8.31b-35,37+



Brothers and sisters: If God is for us, who is against us?

He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else?

Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us?

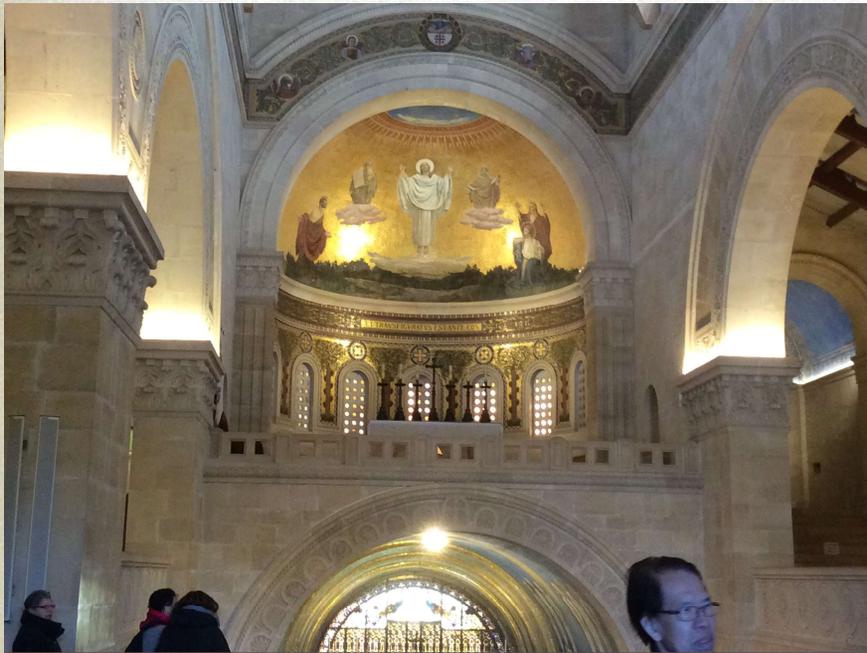
Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

We are the chosen sons and daughters acquitted by Christ

- In verse 31, St. Paul sums up what it means to be a beloved son/daughter in God's covenant family through the Sacrament of Baptism.
- St. Paul gives us the promise that the elect will emerge victorious from all the attacks and sufferings they endure in life since it is God who acquits His chosen of their sins through His beloved Son.
- We have died with Christ in Baptism, and we are also resurrected with Christ to a new life (see [Rom 6:4-5](#)).
- God the Son now sits at the right hand of God the Father, interceding for us in our earthly struggles and ready to greet us when we have completed our journey to salvation (see [Eph 2:4-6](#)).

The Transfiguration of Jesus



Revelation of Christ's
Divine Glory

Church of the Transfiguration - Mt. Tabor

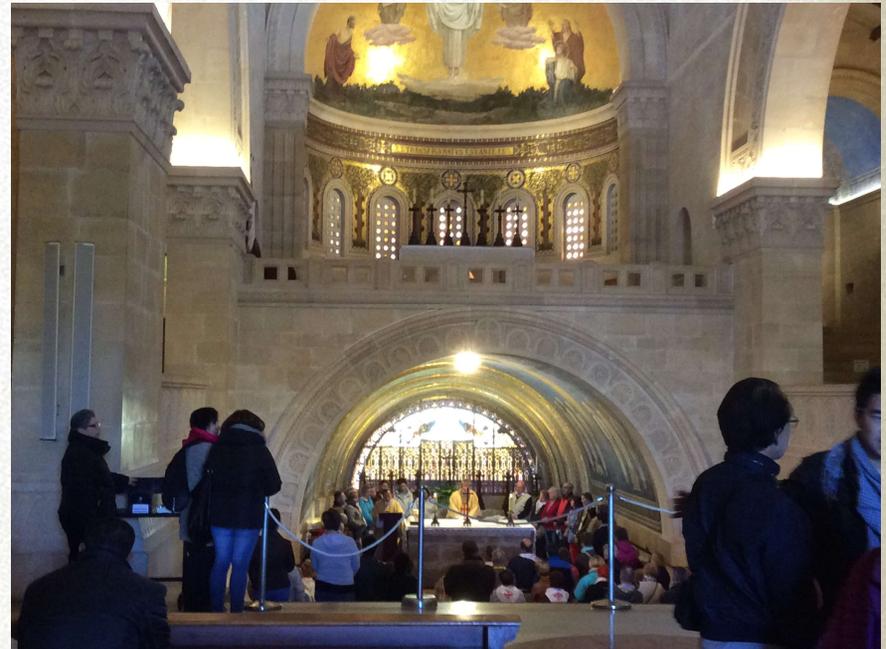
Mark 9. 2-10



Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, “This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!” Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead. So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from the dead could mean.

Church of the Transfiguration



Jesus predicts his death

The disciples and Apostles must have been frightened and discouraged after Jesus' first prediction of His death in [Mark 8:31-33](#) (also see [Mt 17:1-8](#); [Lk 9:28-36](#); [2 Pt 1:16-18](#)).

To give them the vision to grasp in their darkest hour in the fulfillment of His prediction, Jesus took Peter, James, and James' brother John up a "high mountain" to let them witness a manifestation of His glory.

It was an experience that would confirm for them that Jesus is the Son of God and that He will come in glory when all He told them took place.

- The selection of the three out of the twelve Apostles was not a demonstration of favoritism. God does not have favorites.
- It was instead a demonstration of hierarchy in the future administration of Christ's kingdom.
- That the event took place on a mountain is significant.
- Throughout salvation history, mighty works/revelations of God often took place on mountains, including the Theophany of God on Mt. Sinai (see [Gen 22:2, 11](#); [Ex 19:16-20](#); [1 Kng 18:19-39](#); [19:11-18](#); [1 Chr 21:15-17](#); [2 Chr 3:1](#); and [Mt 5:1-2](#)).

Jesus shows Apostles his glory

- Moses and Elijah represented the Law and the prophets for the Old Covenant people. In St. Luke's account of the Transfiguration, he tells us Moses and Elijah appeared in glory and discussed with Jesus the coming hour of His "exodus," meaning His departure, "from Jerusalem," referring to His Passion ([Lk 9:30-31](#)).
- The disciples and Apostles knew Jesus in His human form; however, in the Mt. of Transfiguration encounter, He revealed Himself in His divine glory.
- In the epiphany on the Mt. of Transfiguration, the three Apostles witnessed the coming together of the Old and New Covenants with Christ as the beginning and the end of divine revelation.

Cloud is divine presence of God.

Then a cloud came casting a shadow [episkiazo] over them; then from the cloud came a voice...

A cloud is a frequent vehicle for the manifestation of God's presence in Scripture (see [Ex 16:10](#); [19:9](#); [24:15-16](#); [33:9](#), [34:5](#); [2](#); [40:34](#); [Dan 7:13](#); [2 Mac 2:8](#); [Acts 1:9](#); [Rev 11:12](#); [14:14](#)).

For example:

1. The Pillar of Cloud led the children of Israel on the Exodus journey ([Ex 13:21-22](#)).
2. The overshadowing cloud took possession of the desert Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant ([Ex 40:34](#)).
3. The cloud that filled the newly dedicated Temple in Jerusalem ([1 Kng 8:10-14](#); [2 Chr 5:13-14](#)).
4. Daniel's vision of one like a "son of man" coming to God in Heaven and carried on a cloud ([Dan 7:13](#)).
5. The cloud "shadow" of the Holy Spirit covered the Virgin Mary at the Incarnation ([Lk 1:35](#)).

In the epiphany on the Mt. of Transfiguration, the three Apostles witnessed the coming together of the Old and New Covenants with Christ as the beginning and the end of divine revelation.



Catechism References:

Genesis 22:1-2, 9-13 (CCC 1819*); 22:11 (CCC 332*)

Psalms 116:17 (CCC 1330*)

Romans 8:31 (CCC 2852); 8:32 (CCC 603, 706*, 2572*); 8:34 (CCC 1373, 2634*)

Mark 9:1 (CCC 554-6); Mark 9:2 (CCC 552*); 9:7 (CCC 151*, 459); 9:9 (CCC 649*)

* CCC contain these scripture verses

The Angelus Prayer

V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

**Hail Mary, full of grace,
The Lord is with Thee;
Blessed art thou among women,
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Pray for us sinners,
Now and at the hour of our death. Amen**

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it done unto me according to thy word.

Hail Mary. . .

V. And the Word was made flesh.

R. And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary. . .

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray: Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ Thy Son was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen