

March 15, 2026, Fourth Sunday in Lent READINGS

First Reading: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

¹The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." ²Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.'" ³Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." ⁴Samuel did what the LORD commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" ⁵He said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed is now before the LORD." ⁷But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." ⁸Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." ⁹Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." ¹⁰Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen any of these." ¹¹Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here." ¹²He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; for this is the one." ¹³Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

Psalm: Psalm 23

¹The LORD | is my shepherd;

I shall not | be in want.

²**The LORD makes me lie down | in green pastures**

and leads me be- | side still waters.

³You restore my | soul, O LORD,

and guide me along right pathways | for your name's sake.

⁴**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall | fear no evil;**

for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they | comfort me. R

⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence | of my enemies;

you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is | running over.

⁶**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days | of my life,**

and I will dwell in the house of the | LORD forever. R

THE SUMMONS

Aurora Levins Morales

Last night I dreamed
ten thousand grandmothers
from the twelve hundred corners of the earth
walked out into the gap
one breath deep
between the bullet and the flesh
between the bomb and the family.

They told me we cannot wait for governments.
There are no peacekeepers boarding planes.
There are no leaders who dare to say
every life is precious, so it will have to be us.

They said we will cup our hands around each heart.
We will sing the earth's song, the song of water,
a song so beautiful that vengeance will turn to weeping,
the mourners will embrace, and grief replace
every impulse toward harm.

Ten thousand is not enough, they said,
so, we have sent this dream, like a flock of doves
into the sleep of the world. Wake up. Put on your shoes.

You who are reading this, I am bringing bandages
and a bag of scented guavas from my trees. I think
I remember the tune. Meet me at the corner.
Let's go.