

## **A Reading from the book of the Prophet Jeremiah**

In those days, the princes said to the king:

“Jeremiah ought to be put to death;  
he is demoralizing the soldiers who are left in this city,  
and all the people, by speaking such things to them;  
he is not interested in the welfare of our people,  
but in their ruin.”

King Zedekiah answered: “He is in your power”;  
for the king could do nothing with them.

And so they took Jeremiah  
and threw him into the cistern of Prince Malchiah,  
which was in the quarters of the guard,  
letting him down with ropes.

There was no water in the cistern, only mud,  
and Jeremiah sank into the mud.

Ebed-melech, a court official,  
went there from the palace and said to him:  
“My lord king,  
these men have been at fault  
in all they have done to the prophet Jeremiah,  
casting him into the cistern.

He will die of famine on the spot,  
for there is no more food in the city.”

Then the king ordered Ebed-melech the Cushite  
to take three men along with him,  
and draw the prophet Jeremiah out of the cistern before  
he should die.

**The Word of the Lord!**

## **A Reading from the letter to the Hebrews**

Brothers and sisters:

Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses,  
let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us  
and persevere in running the race that lies before us  
while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus,  
the leader and perfecter of faith.

For the sake of the joy that lay before him  
he endured the cross, despising its shame,  
and has taken his seat at the right of the throne of God.

Consider how he endured such opposition from sinners,  
in order that you may not grow weary and lose heart.

In your struggle against sin  
you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood.

**The Word of the Lord !**