

### We are in the New Covenant



Introduction: Fellow Pilgrims, the love of God has gathered us together into this church today. May our worship bring Him honor and assure our salvation. Our reflection today is taken from Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrew 5:7-9; and John 12:20-33. These biblical spots teach that a grain of wheat must be sown into the earth, dies and decays so that it may produce much living wheat stalks. This dying should be borne in obedience to God's will and his commands of love and forgiveness written in our renewed clean heart and steadfast spirit.

**The Contexts:** The Gospel according to St. John is divided according to tradition into two parts; part one John 1:1-12:1-19, deals with the ministry and miracles of Jesus. Part 2, John 12:19-21:125 deals with the Passion, Death and the Resurrection of the Lord. John did not record the ascension of Jesus. The gospel reading of today cuts through both parts: 'for we would like to see Jesus whom when HE is lifted up, in obedience to the Father, will draw everyone to Himself'. Likewise, the writings of the prophet Jeremiah combines the history, biography and prophecy of Israel. Jeremiah's prophecy ran between 628 BC during the reign of King Josiah and went beyond the destruction and exile around 587 BC. It contains the records of his faith journey and that of Israel. He witnessed Israel's infidelity, abominable pollution of the temple of God and how they spurned the Lord's covenant; 2Chronicles 36:14. In his lifetime, because of their transgression Israel was humiliated severally by the nations. The highest insult was their defeat, destruction and exile to Babylon. They lost the promise land, the temple of God's glory and their king. Such was the situation when Jeremiah proclaimed his pre-Christian gospel of the "new covenant": his message of hope and renewal needed then more than anytime.

**The Message:** Children of God, we are the people of the new covenant of God's love and forgiveness. His loving mercy is carved into our hearts and flows in our bloods. We are also the messengers of this new covenant. The new covenant of the Old Time is fulfilled in Christ Jesus. He is the face of the Father, the Way, the Truth and the Life. Jesus is the Word who reveal God to us. He is God's hand extended to us sinner. He is our consolation in moments of trial, fear and tribulations. He has invited all to the will of the Father. Every Friday of Lent, we are reminded that the vocation of Jesus is *via crucis*. The same is the truth of our journey to the Father. We have to deny the self every day, take up crosses and follow Him, seeking Him in the challenges of our daily lives. JESUS IS THE NEW COVENANT. He is the source of eternal salvation for all who obey Him. He will lead them to the Father's glory.

**Yours in Christ, Fr. Chrysogonus Nwele**

### Let Us Pray:

Lord Jesus, you are the source of eternal salvation. Bless your church with holy joy, and with the spirit of seeking and finding you in every situation: We pray to the Lord.

Father, we, who bear the seal of your covenant of love, pray for those new in faith. May they bear fruits that will last for eternity: We pray to the Lord.

We pray for Pope Francis, Bishop Berg, and all spiritual and civil leaders. May they foster justice, freedom, and equal opportunity so that our world may know peace: We pray to the Lord.

For our parish community. May we be obedient to your will, die to self, and produce much fruits for eternal salvation: We pray to the Lord.

Father, heal our world from fears, man-made sicknesses, and untimely deaths. May the sick among us rise with newness of holy and joyful spirit: We pray to the Lord.

May all the dead spring up like grain of wheat in your kingdom. May their fruits be harvested for all eternity: We pray to the Lord