# Readings: Feria

**First Reading:** Jos 24:1-13

Joshua gathered together all the tribes of Israel at Shechem, summoning their elders, their leaders, their judges and their officers. When they stood in ranks before God, Joshua addressed all the people: "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: In times past your fathers, down to Terah, father of Abraham and Nahor, dwelt beyond the River and served other gods. But I brought your father Abraham from the region beyond the River and led him through the entire land of Canaan. I made his descendants numerous, and gave him Isaac. To Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. To Esau I assigned the mountain region of Seir in which to settle, while Jacob and his children went down to Egypt.

"Then I sent Moses and Aaron, and smote Egypt with the prodigies which I wrought in her midst. Afterward I led you out of Egypt, and when you reached the sea, the Egyptians pursued your fathers to the Red Sea with chariots and horsemen. Because they cried out to the LORD, he put darkness between your people and the Egyptians, upon whom he brought the sea so that it engulfed them. After you witnessed what I
did to Egypt, and dwelt a long time in the desert, I brought you into the land of the Amorites who lived east of the Jordan.

They fought against you, but I delivered them into your power. You took possession of their land, and I destroyed them, the two kings of the Amorites, before you. Then Balak, son of Zippor, king of Moab, prepared to war against Israel. He summoned
Balaam, son of Beor, to curse you; but I would not listen to Balaam. On the contrary, he had to bless you, and I saved you from him. Once you crossed the Jordan and came to Jericho, the men of Jericho fought against you, but I delivered them also into your power. And I sent the hornets ahead of you that drove them
(the Amorites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hittites, Girgashites, Hivites and Jebusites) out of your way; it was not your sword or your bow.

"I gave you a land that you had not tilled and cities that you had not built, to dwell in; you have eaten of vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant."

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**Responsorial Psalm:** Ps 136:1–3, 16–18, 21–22 and 24

R His mercy endures forever.

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,
for his mercy endures forever;
Give thanks to the God of gods,
for his mercy endures forever;
Give thanks to the LORD of lords,
for his mercy endures forever.
**R His mercy endures forever.**

Who led his people through the wilderness,
for his mercy endures forever;
Who smote great kings,
for his mercy endures forever;
And slew powerful kings,
for his mercy endures forever.
**R His mercy endures forever.**

And made their land a heritage,
for his mercy endures forever;
The heritage of Israel his servant,
for his mercy endures forever;
And freed us from our foes,
for his mercy endures forever.

**R His mercy endures forever.**

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**Gospel Reading:** Matthew 19:3-12

Some Pharisees approached him. They wanted to test him and asked, "Is a man allowed to divorce his wife for any reason he wants?"

Jesus replied, "Have you not read that in the beginning the Creator made them male and female, and he said: Man has now to leave father and mother, and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one body? So they are no longer two but one body; let no one separate what God has joined."

They asked him, "Then, why did Moses command us to write a bill of dismissal in order to divorce?" Jesus replied, "Moses knew your stubborn heart, so he allowed you to divorce your wives, but it was not so in the beginning. Therefore I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, unless it be for infidelity, and marries another, commits adultery."

The disciples said, "If that is the condition of a married man, it is better not to marry." Jesus said to them, "Not everybody can accept what you have just said, but only those who have received this gift. Some are born incapable of marriage. Some have been made that way by others. But there are some who have given

up the possibility of marriage for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let the one who can accept it, accept it."