2nd Sunday of Lent, February 25, 2018

Genesis 22:1-2,9,10-13,15-18

Psalm 116

Romans 8:31-14

Mark 9:2-10

So God tests Abraham. Abraham is to take his only begotten son up the mountain and kill him in cold blood as a sacrifice to our God. This story is shocking to our ears – a father killing his son because of religion. A killing of any child is offensive to our ears. As it should be.

This story was also shocking to the Israelites also – as it should have been. Does our God rejoice in us killing our children? Of course not. Absolutely not.

In the early days of God’s chosen people, they lived among a tribe called the Ammorites. It seemed that they sacrificed their children to their god called Molech. The Israelites thought, “Should we do the same?” Hence the story of Abraham and Isaac, that tells the chosen people that their God was nothing like the god of the Amorites. Yahweh, the God of the Chosen People, explains to them by way of this story that their God is not like any other god. Children are precious to our God.

Leviticus 18:21 – “You shall not give any of your children to devote them by fire to Molech, and so profane the name of your God: I am the Lord”

Jeremiah 7:27-28, 30-31 – “So you shall speak these words to them, but they will not listen to you. You shall call to them, but they will not answer you. And you shall say to them, ‘This is the nation that did not obey the voice of the Lord their God….’ For the sons of Judah have done evil in my sight, says the Lord; they have set the abomination in the house which is called by my name, to defile it. And they have built the high place of Topheth…to burn their sons and daughters in the fire; which I did not command, nor did it come to my mind.”

Ezekiel 20 :30 -31a – Wherefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God: Will you defile yourselves after the manner of your fathers and go astray after their detestable things? When you offer your gifts and sacrifice your sons by fire, you defile yourselves with all your idols to this day.

And so the killing of children is abominable to our God.

It seems that America should pay heed. The following is from the website of “Everytown Research”, which reports on shootings and killings of our school children in our country.

2/14/18 Marjory Stoneman Douglas H.S., Parkland, Florida

2/5/18 Oxon Hill H.S., Maryland

2/1/18 Salvator B. Castro Middle School, Los Angeles

1/31/18 Lincoln H.S., Philadelphia

1/23/18 Marshall County H.S. Kentucky

1/22/18 The Net Charter School, Louisiana

1/22/18 Italy H.S., Italy, Texas

1/20/18 Wake Forest University, North Carolina

!2/27/17 Lincoln Elementary School, Lancaster, California

12/19/17 Beecher H.S., Beecher, Michigan

12/13/17 Penn State Beaver College, Monasa, Pennsylvania

12/12/17 East Stroudsburg University, Pennsylvania

12/7/17 Aztex H.S., New Mexico

11/23/17 Manual H.S., Colorado

11/14/17 Lake Mineola H.S., Florida

11/11/17 Albany State University, Albany, Georgia

10/31/17 University of Utah

10/25/17 Grambling State University, Louisiana

10/19/17 Virginia State University, Petersburg, Virginia

10/9/17 Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas

9/30/17 Purchase Line Elementary, Commodore, Pennsylvania

9/29/17 Mattoon H.S., Mattoon, Illinois

9/17/17 University of Akron, Akron, Ohio

9/13/17 Freeman H.S., Rockford, Washington

9/5/17 Tennessee State University, Nashville, Tennessee

9/1/17 Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas

7/23/17 University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Arkansas

7/21/17 Spanish Fork H.S., Spanish Fork, Utah

7/19/17 Hickman Academy Prep School, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

6/16/17 Warren Elementary School, Chicago, Illinois

6/5/17 Ravenscroft Beauty College, Fort Wayne, Indiana

5/2/17 North Lake College, Irving, Texas

4/15/17 Booker T. Washington H.S., Tulsa Oklahoma

4/10/17 North Park Elementary School, San Bernadine, California

3/13/17 Central State University, Wilberforce, Ohio

1/27 17 South Akron H.S., Akron, South Carolina

1/20/17 West Liberty-Salem H.S., West Liberty, Ohio

There have been 290 school shootings in America since 2013

Let us not forget December, 12, 2012, the slaughter at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut and the April 20, 1999 shooting at Columbine H.S. in Colorado and the Tower shooting at the University of Texas of August 1, 1966.

Because we have not taken the message of our God to heart, do you not think that our God weeps?