



## St. Ruth

### Sunday before Christmas

The short biblical book of Ruth is about a foreigner who, out of loyalty to her mother-in-law, adopts the Hebrew culture as her own and becomes an ancestor of Israel's most famous king. The story begins with a woman named Naomi immigrating eastward from the region of Judea to the land of Moab with her husband, Elimelech. He dies there and so do their two sons, who have married Moabite women. Before

heading home, Naomi urges her daughters-in-law to return to their families. One of them, Ruth, refuses, declaring faithfulness to Naomi despite the hardships that await two widows in Judea. Once there, through obedience to Naomi and her own hard work as a field gleaner, Ruth gains security for both of them by persuading Boaz, Naomi's relative, to marry her and care for them both. Their son, Obed, fathers Jesse, who in turn fathers David, the famous young giant slayer and eventual king of Israel.