



Christ in Our Neighborhood

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Prayer

Father in Heaven, as Your Spirit of Truth, Love, and Mercy sent your Son on mission, we are called and sent by the same Spirit to carry on the mission of Jesus Christ. Help us not to fear our calling but celebrate our share in the proclamation of the Good News. Amen.

Commentary

1st Reading: Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Last week, we reclaimed our mission to be prophetic, priestly, and kingly people in the manner of Jesus Christ.

As Christians, we are all called to be prophetic people. But, how are we to carry out this portion of our threefold mission?

Our First Reading gives us an example of what it means to be prophetic. God directed the Prophet Jonah to proclaim to the Ninevites that the Lord was displeased with their town and, should they amend their lives, they would be spared. Because of his prophetic message, the people of Nineveh repented and God rewarded them.

It should be noted that Jonah was a reluctant prophet. He did not care for the Ninevites and would have preferred to have God's wrath come down upon them. He even ran away from God in order to avoid his prophetic calling.

Many Christians would prefer not to be prophetic. For some, they would prefer to have God's wrath remove sinners from the earth. For others, they would prefer having others (priests, deacons, catechists) proclaim the Gospel. We can all be reluctant prophets! But, to be Christian means to be prophetic. We are called by name and we are sent on mission.

Questions

What keeps me from wanting to proclaim Christ to others?

Commentary

2nd Reading: 1 Cor 7:29-31

St. Paul provides in these few short lines a message of spiritual abandonment. Recognizing that this world is "passing away," he calls us to let go of what normally occupies us in this life and then submit to God.

St. Francis of Assisi gives similar words of abandonment:

"Make me a channel of your peace
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned
In giving to all men that we receive
And in dying that we're born to eternal life."

We would not even consider abandoning ourselves unless Jesus himself abandoned his life first. As the High Priest, he laid down his life as a sacrifice upon the cross for our sake. Abandoning His life, we are granted life.

We are not only called to have a share in the Prophetic mission of Christ. We are also called to participate in His Priestly Mission. Following the Lord who laid down His life for us, we are called to abandon ourselves to this world as we embrace an everlasting world with God.

Question

How are you abandoning things of this world?

You are encouraged to open your home and invite a friend to break open Scripture and study Word of God made flesh through *Christ in Our Neighborhood*. Visit:

dphx.org/Christ-in-our-neighborhood

Called & Sent:

Part 2 of 3

Commentary

Gospel: Mark 1:14-20

A great deal of this year's Gospel readings will come from Mark. Back in Advent, we were already introduced to Mark's Gospel as we reflected on John the Baptist. John the Baptist spoke of one who was to come (Mk 1:1-8). After John baptizes Jesus in the Jordan (Mk 1:9-13), Jesus does not speak of one who is to come. Rather, he speaks of a "Kingdom that is at hand."

As the Gospel of Mark unfolds, we will see how the "Kingdom of God is at hand." More importantly, we will see that Jesus is the Messiah (the King) and that His Kingdom is already in the midst of his people (Mk 12:34).

Indeed! Jesus is the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God. Unlike John the Baptist, He does not speak of one who is to come. He does not point to another future leader. He is the King - the long awaited Messiah.

Reflecting on our call to be prophetic and priestly people in the manner of Christ, we are also called to share in His kingly mission. As the Gospel of Mark unfolds this year, notice how Jesus' Kingship is made manifest through His miracles, forgiveness, and charity.

As Christians, sharing in his kingly mission, we are called to dispense the graces of his Kingdom through acts of forgiveness and charity as well.

Question

How do you dispense and administer mercy and forgiveness as a member of the royal household of God?

This Week's Task

January 22 is the Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of the Unborn. As a prophet, speak out for those who are voiceless. As a priest, offer a prayer for the unborn. As a royal member of God's Kingdom, bless those who do not understand the value and sanctity of life.

Group Prayer

The group prays or sings the following from the late composer, Lucien Deiss :

Priestly people,
Kingly people,
holy people.
God's chosen people,
sing praise to the Lord.

We sing to you, the Shepherd,
Who leads to the kingdom;
We give you praise,
Who gather all your sheep
In the one true fold.

Priestly people,
Kingly people,
holy people.
God's chosen people,
sing praise to the Lord.

The prayer continues with Psalm 25

Psalm

Response: Teach me your ways, O Lord.

Your ways, O LORD, make known to me;
teach me your paths,
Guide me in your truth and teach me,
for you are God my savior.

R. Teach me your ways, O Lord.

Remember that your compassion, O LORD,
and your love are from of old.
In your kindness remember me,
because of your goodness, O LORD.

R. Teach me your ways, O Lord.

Good and upright is the LORD;
thus he shows sinners the way.
He guides the humble to justice
and teaches the humble his way.

R. Teach me your ways, O Lord.

Conclude with an Our Father