



Christ in Our Neighborhood

Fourth 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: DT 18:15-20

Over the last two weeks, we have focused on our common call to embrace the mission of Christ who is Prophet, Priest, and King. This week, we will answer the question: Of “WHAT” is Jesus a Prophet, Priest, and King?

As we have been praying (see above), the Spirit of God had sent Jesus on mission. The Spirit of Truth, Love, and Mercy sends Jesus to be the Prophet of Truth, the Priest of Love, and the King of Mercy.

Unlike any other prophet, Jesus is Prophet par excellence! For, if God is the ultimate Truth and Jesus is God, then Jesus is both Prophet of Truth and Truth Himself.

Thus, as we read in Deuteronomy, Moses speaks of a prophet like himself who will be raised from among his kin and we are to “listen to him.”

We will read later in the Gospel of Mark (9:7) about Jesus standing between Moses and Elijah at the Transfiguration. There we will hear God say about Jesus, “This is my beloved Son. Listen to him!” Jesus, who is God and Truth, stands above all prophets

Questions

Is Jesus a way to the Truth for you? Or is He Truth for you?

Commentary

2nd Reading: 1 Cor 7:32-35

Taking up where we had been last week, St. Paul continues to call his readers to a spirit of abandonment.

We reflected on Jesus as the Priest of Love who abandoned His own life for us out of love so that we might live with Him in love forever.

Our Second Reading today speaks of a love that is found within marriage. The love of man and wife is a profound love; complete with anxieties and sacrifices.

In a spirit of abandonment, St. Paul invites his readers to consider placing the truest Love of our life - God - above all other

loves; even above the love that is found in such a worthy institution as marriage.

This is not to say that celibacy (priesthood or religious life) is the answer. Rather, St. Paul is challenging us to “think outside of the box,” and consider truly living a sacrificial love - in the manner of Jesus the Priest and Victim - who gave everything to God and to us without holding back.

Question

How is Jesus, the Priest of Love, calling you to a sacrificial life of love?

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 3 of 3

Commentary

Gospel: Mark 1:21-28

If our First Reading calls us to a prophetic mission of Christ in truth, and the Second Reading calls us to a priestly mission of Christ in love, then our Gospel invites us to embrace the royal mission of Christ in Mercy.

Last Sunday, Jesus spoke of His Kingdom being at hand. He is the King, and sent by the Spirit of Mercy, who dispenses the mercy of his Kingdom throughout His ministry on Earth.

Our Gospel this week shows how Christ the King dispenses His mercy. Not only does He speak with authority (as Prophet), He commands with authority so that the unclean spirit leaves the man who is possessed.

This is the first example in the Gospel of Mark of the Kingdom of God coming into our world through Christ the Merciful King.

As Christians, if we believe that we have a participation in the Kingdom of Christ, then we must believe that Christ has given us the power to dispense His mercy in the world.

The Spirit of Mercy was breathed on us through Christ so that we can be Christ to a world that desperately needs mercy.

Question

Do you believe you are given the power to dispense the mercy of God by the grace of God?

This Week's Task

This week, dispense God's mercy in one of the following ways:

1. Forgive someone.
2. Visit a sick person.
3. Feed the hungry.

Group Prayer

The group prays the following:

Spirit of Truth,
speak to me.

Spirit of Love,
abide in me.

Spirit of Mercy,
heal me.

Jesus,

Let me be your Voice of Truth.

Let me be your Heart of Love.

Let me be your Hands of Mercy.

The prayer continues with Psalm 95

Psalm

**Response: If today you hear his voice,
harden not your hearts.**

Come, let us sing joyfully to the LORD;
let us acclaim the rock of our salvation.
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;
let us joyfully sing psalms to him.

R. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Come, let us bow down in worship;
let us kneel before the LORD who made us.
For he is our God,
and we are the people he shepherds, the flock he guides.

R. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Oh, that today you would hear his voice:
“Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,
as in the day of Massah in the desert,
Where your fathers tempted me;
they tested me though they had seen my works.”

R. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Conclude with an Our Father