

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle A

After Christmas the church calendar is starting a new cycle which is called: Ordinary Time. Today we are celebrating the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time. As you already know, the word ordinary here means in order, like we count 2nd, 3rd, and so forth. Let us now turn to the readings for this Sunday.

The First reading is from the prophet Isaiah. Isaiah is one of the very important prophets. Do you know what a prophet is or does? He is a teacher, a person who has received a message from the Lord and then tells us about it. Isaiah lived 700 years before Jesus was born, and yet he announced that a savior, Jesus, would be coming. In this reading, he tells that the Lord has rescued the people, the Lord took them out of the darkness, and He freed those who had been slaves. He gives the people hope.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah (**Is 9:2-4**)

Those who have walked in darkness have seen a great
light.

And it shines on everyone who lives in the land of the
darkest shadows.

Our Lord, You have made Your nation stronger.
Because of You, its people are glad and celebrate like
workers at harvest time or soldiers dividing what they
have taken.

You have broken the power of those who oppressed
and enslaved Your people.

You have rescued them as You did from Midian.

The Word of the Lord.

In the Responsorial Psalm, we tell everyone that God has saved us, and we know that we do not have to be afraid. We are safe because God is on our side.

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 27:1, 4abc)

The Lord is my light and my salvation.

The Lord is my light and my salvation.

You, Lord, are the light that keeps me safe.

I am not afraid of anyone.

You protect me, and I have no fears.

The Lord is my light and my salvation.

I ask only one thing, Lord:

Let me live in Your house every day of my life.

The Lord is my light and my salvation.

How many times during the day are we afraid of something in our daily lives? We are afraid of danger, or we are not sure if we can handle our problems. That is when we can turn to God, we can tell Him in our prayers to be with us, to protect us, and then we know that He will be with us because we do not have to be afraid.

The Second Reading of today is from the first letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians. Do you remember the story of St. Paul? He lived during the time just after Jesus ascended into heaven. His name was Saul, and he was very much against Jesus. On his way to arrest followers of Jesus, Paul was knocked off his horse, a message from God, by a strong light which also made him blind. After three days his sight was restored, and he became a strong follower and preacher of Christ's teachings. Read what his advice to us is.

A reading from the first letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians (**Corinth 1:10-13, 17**)

Brothers and sisters:

As a follower of our Lord Jesus Christ, I beg you to get along with each other.

Don't take sides.

Always try to agree in what you think.

Several people from Chloe's family have already reported to me that you keep arguing with each other.

They have said that some of you claim to follow me, while others claim to follow Apollos, Peter, or Christ.

Has Christ been divided up?

Was I nailed to a cross for you?

Were you baptized in my name?

Christ did not send me to baptize.

He sent me to tell the good news without using big words that would make the cross of Christ lose its power.

The Word of the Lord.

Paul reminds the people that Christ has sent him to tell us the good news of Christ, that we should not fight with each other, and that we should live like the example that Jesus had shown us.

Today's gospel takes us to the time that Jesus was alive and shows how he changed the lives of some simple fishermen to become his followers and apostles. Jesus simply asked them to follow Him, leave their boats, their homes and families, and fish, as He said: "for people instead of fish."

Alleluia, Alleluia. *Alleluia, Alleluia.*

Jesus preached the good news of the kingdom and healed all who were sick.

Alleluia, Alleluia.

+ A reading from the holy gospel according to St. Matthew (**Matt 4:17-23**).

Jesus started preaching, "Turn back to God!
The kingdom of heaven will soon be here."

As He was walking along the shore of the Sea of
Galilee,

He saw two brothers.

One was Simon, also known as Peter, and the other
was Andrew.

They were fishermen, and they were casting their net
into the sea.

Jesus said to them, "Come follow me! I will tell you how
to fish for people instead of fish."

Right then the two brothers dropped their nets and
went with Him.

Jesus walked on until He saw James and John, the
sons of Zebedee.

They were in a boat with their father, mending their
nets.

Jesus asked them to come follow Him too.

Right away they left their boat and their father and went
with Jesus.

Jesus went all over Galilee, teaching in their

synagogues and preaching the good news about God's kingdom.

He also healed every kind of disease and sickness.

The gospel of the Lord.

How amazing is it that these four men and later several others felt so strong to leave all behind and follow Jesus to bring us all the good news of our savior, the Son of God! Let us all also become followers of Jesus and obey His commands. When we are in need, we know that we call on God for help. We know He will be there for us.

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, 2023

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