

Sunday Readings

10th February 2019

FIRST READING

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah 6:1-8

In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord of Hosts seated on a high throne; his train filled the sanctuary; above him stood seraphs, each one with six wings.

And they cried out to one another in this way,

'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts.
His glory fills the whole earth.'

The foundations of the threshold shook with the voice of the one who cried out, and the Temple was filled with smoke. I said:

'What a wretched state I am in! I am lost,
for I am a man of unclean lips
and I live among a people of unclean lips,
and my eyes have looked at the King, the Lord of Hosts.'

Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding in his hand a live coal which he had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. With this he touched my mouth and said:

'See now, this has touched your lips,
your sin is taken away,
your iniquity is purged.'

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying:

'Whom shall I send? Who will be our messenger?'

I answered, 'Here I am, send me.'

The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 137:1-5. 7-8. R/. v1.

R/. Before the angels I will bless you, O Lord.

I thank you, Lord, with all my heart:
you have heard the words of my mouth.
In the presence of the angels I will bless you.
I will adore before your holy temple. **R/.**

I thank you for your faithfulness and love,
which excel all we ever knew of you.
On the day I called, you answered;
you increased the strength of my soul. **R/.**

All earth's kings shall thank you
when they hear the words of your mouth.
They shall sing of the Lord's ways:
'How great is the glory of the Lord!' **R/.**

You stretch out your hand and save me,
your hand will do all things for me.
Your love, O Lord, is eternal,
discard not the work of your hands. **R/.**

SECOND READING

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians 15:1-11

Brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, the gospel that you received and in which you are firmly established; because the gospel will save you only if you keep believing exactly what I preached to you – believing anything else will not lead to anything.

Well then, in the first place, I taught you what I had been taught myself, namely that Christ died for our sins, in accordance with the scriptures; that he was buried; and that he was raised to life on the third day, in accordance with the scriptures; that he appeared first to Cephas and secondly to the Twelve. Next he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died; then he appeared to James, and then to all the apostles; and last of all he appeared to me too; it was as though I was born when no one expected it.

I am the least of the apostles; in fact, since I persecuted the Church of God, I hardly deserve the name apostle; but by God's grace that is what I am, and the grace that he gave me has not been fruitless. On the contrary, I, or rather the grace of God that is with me, have worked harder than any of the others; but what matters is that I preach what they preach, and this is what you all believed.

The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

GOSPEL

Luke 5:1-11

The Lord be with you. *And with your Spirit.*
A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.
Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus was standing one day by the Lake of Gennesaret, with the crowd pressing round him listening to the word of God, when he caught sight of two boats close to the bank. The fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats – it was Simon's – and asked him to put out a little from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat.

When he had finished speaking he said to Simon, 'Put out into deep water and pay out your nets for a catch.' 'Master,' Simon replied, 'we worked hard all night long and caught nothing, but if you say so, I will pay out the nets.' And when they had done this they netted such a huge number of fish that their nets began to tear, so they signalled to their companions in the other boat to come and help them; when these came, they filled the two boats to sinking point.

When Simon Peter saw this he fell at the knees of Jesus saying, 'Leave me, Lord; I am a sinful man.' For he and all his companions were completely overcome by the catch they had made; so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were Simon's partners. But Jesus said to Simon, 'Do not be afraid; from now on it is men you will catch.' Then, bringing their boats back to land, they left everything and followed him.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

The Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lectionary Year C

the word of god

saint of the week

Jesus, in today's Gospel, is preaching the word of God to the crowd, not in the synagogues as he had been accustomed, but out in the countryside by the lake of Gennesaret. It may be that he was no longer welcome in the synagogues or that he was avoiding being the cause of popular disturbance, but, whatever the reason for the move to the open country, the lake now becomes the setting for the manifestation of Jesus' power as he both presides at the miraculous draught of fish and uses his authority to still the storm.

Jesus is, in effect, 'catching' Peter. Having cured his mother-in-law, he now takes him away from all his affairs and makes him his first follower: "Do not be afraid; from now on it is men you will catch." This commission has come to Peter at the moment that he has begun to recognize his own unworthiness and to discern that he is in the presence of God. Peter is given special prominence by Luke in his account and, indeed, we are all invited to see ourselves in his place, recognizing that we too are sinful beings who are wonderfully capable of being transformed by the love of God into the ones who will take his Word to the nations.



This lovely Gospel reading is full of symbolic detail as, for example, when Jesus tells Peter to put out into deep water – the deep water being a symbol of both the abyss from which the disciples will save men, and of the vast extent of the Gentile world into which the ministry of Peter is extended, at first hesitantly, in the Acts of the Apostles.

To all Christians finding themselves anew in the love of God, to all Christians who are awed by the task before them, to you and to me, Christ addresses the words with which he comforts and enables his first follower. "Do not be afraid", he says, "from now on it is men you will catch".

Monday 11 February 2019

Our Lady of Lourdes



On December 8, 1854, Pope Pius IX proclaimed the dogma of the Immaculate Conception in the apostolic constitution *Ineffabilis Deus*. A little more than three years later, on February 11, 1858, a young lady appeared to Bernadette Soubirous. This began a series of visions. During the apparition on March 25, the lady identified herself with the words: "I am the Immaculate Conception."

Bernadette was a sickly child of poor parents. Their practice of the Catholic faith was scarcely more than lukewarm. Bernadette could pray the Our Father, the Hail Mary and the Creed. She also knew the prayer of the Miraculous Medal: "O Mary conceived without sin." During interrogations Bernadette gave an account of what she saw. It was "something white in the shape of a girl." She used the word *aquero*, a dialect term meaning "this thing." It was "a pretty young girl with a rosary over her arm." Her white robe was encircled by a blue girdle. She wore a white veil. There was a yellow rose on each foot. A rosary was in her hand. Bernadette was also impressed by the fact that the lady did not use the informal form of address (*tu*), but the polite form (*vous*). The humble virgin appeared to a humble girl and treated her with dignity. Through that humble girl, Mary revitalized and continues to revitalize the faith of millions of people. People began to flock to Lourdes from other parts of France and from all over the world. In 1862 Church authorities confirmed the authenticity of the apparitions and authorized the cult of Our Lady of Lourdes for the diocese. The Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes became worldwide in 1907.

prayer of the week

From Saint John Paul II's
Prayer to Our Lady of Lourdes

Hail Mary, lowly handmaid of the Lord, Glorious Mother of Christ! Faithful Virgin, holy dwelling-place of the Word, Teach us to persevere in listening to the Word, and to be docile to the voice of the Spirit, attentive to his promptings in the depths of our conscience and to his manifestations in the events of history.

Holy Mary, Mother of believers, Our Lady of Lourdes, pray for us. Amen.