

Sunday Message

THE WORD

Year B • Psalter Week 3

YOU ARE CALLED TO BE HOLY

(JOHN 17:11-19)



Our Gospel passage today is an extract from what is called “Jesus’ Priestly Prayer”, during which he speaks directly to the Father on behalf of his disciples, who are present with him at the Last Supper.

Jesus is about to leave them, and knows that they are not in a fit condition, so will need the Father’s help in the face of what is to happen in the future. Jesus sums up his care for the disciples, acknowledging that one has been lost, but through that one’s deliberate choice. Jesus asks the Father to make the disciples “holy”, that is, that they identify themselves with God’s purpose, just as Jesus did. His final act of holiness will be to give himself completely to God’s will, and in this will reveal to them the love of the Father. Holiness is rooted in the unity of the disciples with the Father, and it is on the basis of this that Jesus is sending them out to continue his work of revealing God to human beings. ■

DO

As you go about your daily routine, remember that holiness is found in the little, everyday things of life.



REFLECT

The text of our Gospel reading presents Jesus as praying, “Consecrate them in the truth”. The underlying meaning is “to make holy”. This notion can be confusing for some people, as it conjures up images of individuals whose lives are totally dedicated to praying and serving others, perhaps wearing distinctive clothing or emblems of one sort or another: they are different from normal or ordinary folk.

The Second Vatican Council, in its document on the Church, rejects the idea that holiness is something reserved for special individuals, but is the calling of all baptised disciples of Jesus. To be a disciple of Jesus is the fundamental vocation of all Christians: how each one lives this out will depend on their circumstances; most are called to marriage and family life, others to a different path, but no one way of living out our baptismal commitment is better or higher than any other. Everyone is called to live as best they can by the teachings of Jesus, and, in that, each person can be said to be holy, to be committed to the Gospel values.

One religious sister, when she read the chapter entitled “The Universal Call To Holiness” in the document on the Church, said to herself that the bishops at the Council had just written the death sentence for religious life: no longer would people feel that they necessarily had to become a priest, a nun or religious sister, or a member of a teaching order of brothers to be someone totally committed to the Christian life. There would be no spiritual advantage in entering the convent or monastery. Her insight may go a long way to explaining the present dearth of what we traditionally called vocations: it is, perhaps, not due to a lack of generosity or the refusal of young people to answer the call, just that the Holy Spirit is calling us all in a different way. The “typical” Christian is sitting in the pew. ■

LEARN

The official teaching of the Church is that all Christians are called to be holy.

Holiness consists in our being committed to living out our baptismal promises as best we can in our daily lives.

No state of life in the Church is necessarily holier, better, or higher than any other: each is appropriate to the person concerned.

SAY

Teach us, good Lord, to serve you as you deserve.

(St Ignatius of Loyola)

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

O Lord, hear my voice, for I have called to you;
of you my heart has spoken: Seek his face;
hide not your face from me, alleluia.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

COLLECT

Graciously hear our supplications, O Lord,
so that we, who believe that the Saviour of
the human race
is with you in your glory,
may experience, as he promised,
until the end of the world,
his abiding presence among us.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of
the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING Acts 1:15-17, 20-26

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.
One day Peter stood up to speak to the
brothers – there were about a hundred
and twenty persons in the congregation:
“Brothers, the passage of scripture had to
be fulfilled in which the Holy Spirit, speaking
through David, foretells the fate of Judas,
who offered himself as a guide to the men
who arrested Jesus – after having been one
of our number and actually sharing this
ministry of ours.
“In the Book of Psalms it says:

Let someone else take his office.

“We must therefore choose someone who
has been with us the whole time that the Lord
Jesus was travelling round with us, someone
who was with us right from the time when
John was baptising until the day when he
was taken up from us – and he can act with
us as a witness to his resurrection.”

Having nominated two candidates, Joseph
know as Barsabbas, whose surname was
Justus, and Matthias, they prayed, “Lord, you
can read everyone’s heart; show us therefore
which of these two you have chosen to take
over the ministry and apostolate, which
Judas abandoned to go to his proper place.”
They then drew lots for them, and as the lot
fell to Matthias, he was listed as one of the
twelve apostles.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 102

Response:

The Lord has set his sway in heaven.

or

Alleluia!

1. My soul, give thanks to the Lord;
all my being, bless his holy name.
My soul, give thanks to the Lord
and never forget all his blessings. (R.)
2. For as the heavens are high above the
earth
so strong is his love for those who fear
him.
As far as the east is from the west
so far does he remove our sins. (R.)
3. The Lord has set his sway in heaven
and his kingdom is ruling over all.
Give thanks to the Lord, all his angels,
mighty in power, fulfilling his word. (R.)

SECOND READING 1 John 4:11-16

A reading from the first letter of St John.

My dear people,
since God has loved us so much,
we too should love one another.
No one has ever seen God;
But as long as we love one another
God will live in us
and his love will be complete in us.
We can know that we are living in him
and he is living in us
because he lets us share his Spirit.
We ourselves saw and we testify
that the Father sent his Son
as saviour of the world.
If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son
of God,
God lives in him, and he in God.
We ourselves have known and put our faith in
God’s love toward ourselves.
God is love
and anyone who lives in love lives in God,
and God lives in him.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
I will not leave you orphans, says the Lord;
I will come back to you, and your hearts will
be full of joy.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL John 17:11-19

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said:

“Holy Father,
keep those you have given me true to your
name,
so that they may be one like us.
While I was with them,
I kept those you had given me true to your
name,
I have watched over them and not one is
lost
except the one who chose to be lost,
and this was to fulfil the scriptures.
But now I am coming to you
and while still in the world I say these
things
to share my joy with them to the full.
I passed your word on to them,
and the world hated them,

because they belong to the world
no more than I belong to the world.
I am not asking you to remove them from
the world,
but to protect them from the evil one.
They do not belong to the world
any more than I belong to the world.
Consecrate them in the truth;
your word is truth.
As you sent me into the world,
I have sent them into the world,
and for their sake I consecrate myself
so that they too may be consecrated in
truth.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,

(all bow during the next two lines)

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the
Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living
and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.
Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Accept, O Lord, the prayers of your faithful
with the sacrificial offerings,
that through these acts of devotedness
we may pass over to the glory of heaven.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Father, I pray that they may be one
as we also are one, alleluia.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Hear us, O God our Saviour,
And grant us confidence,
that through these sacred mysteries
there will be accomplished in the body of the
whole Church
what was already come to pass in Christ her
Head.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

