

Sunday, January 24, 2021

Third Sunday after Epiphany / Lectionary 3, Year B

Introduction

As we continue through the time after Epiphany, stories of the call to discipleship show us the implications of our baptismal calling to show Christ to the world. Jesus begins proclaiming the good news and calling people to repentance right after John the Baptist is arrested for preaching in a similar way. Knowing that John was later executed, we see at the very outset the cost of discipleship. Still, the two sets of brothers leave everything they have known and worked for all their lives to follow Jesus and fish for people.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, by grace alone you call us and accept us in your service. Strengthen us by your Spirit, and make us worthy of your call, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

First Reading: Jonah 3:1-5, 10

The book of Jonah is a comedy starring a reluctant prophet who is given a one-sentence message: Nineveh will be destroyed in forty days. Much to Jonah's dismay, the people of Nineveh repent. The point of the story is to get the reader to wrestle with the question "On whom should God have mercy?"

¹The word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time, saying, ²"Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you." ³So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days' walk across. ⁴Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's walk. And he cried out, "Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" ⁵And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth.

¹⁰When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

Psalm: Psalm 62:5-12

God alone is my rock and my salvation. (Ps. 62:6)

⁵For God alone I | wait in silence;
truly, my hope | is in God.

⁶**God alone is my rock and | my salvation,
my stronghold, so that I shall nev- | er be shaken.**

⁷In God is my deliverance | and my honor;
God is my strong rock | and my refuge.

⁸**Put your trust in God al- | ways, O people,
pour out your hearts before the one who | is our refuge. R**

⁹Those of high degree are but a fleeting breath; those of low estate can- | not be trusted.
Placed on the scales together they weigh even less | than a breath.

¹⁰**Put no trust in extortion; in robbery take no | empty pride;
though wealth increase, set not your | heart upon it.**

¹¹God has spoken once, twice | have I heard it,
that power be- | longs to God.

¹²**Steadfast love belongs to | you, O Lord,
for you repay all according | to their deeds. R**

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

Paul does not disapprove of marriage or other human social institutions. He does, however, want Christians to live in the present in fervent anticipation of God's future, which even now has dawned through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

²⁹Brothers and sisters, the appointed time has grown short; from now on, let even those who have wives be as though they had none, ³⁰and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no possessions, ³¹and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away.

Gospel: Mark 1:14-20

Before Jesus calls his first disciples, he proclaims a message that becomes known as “the gospel” or good news from God. God is ready to rule our lives. Those who realize this will respond with repentance and faith.

¹⁴Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.”

¹⁶As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. ¹⁷And Jesus said to them, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people.” ¹⁸And immediately they left their nets and followed him. ¹⁹As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. ²⁰Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

Upcoming Commemorations

Conversion of Paul

Monday, January 25, 2021

The week of prayer begun by the remembrance of Peter's confession now comes to an end as we recall the pivotal moment in the life of the other pillar of the early church, the apostle Paul. His

encounter with the risen Christ turned him from persecutor of the followers of Christ to one of their leaders.

Timothy, Titus, and Silas, missionaries

Tuesday, January 26, 2021

These three early Christian men were missionary companions of the apostle Paul. Timothy became bishop of Ephesus, Titus bishop of Crete, and Silas was imprisoned with Paul at Philippi until they were delivered by an earthquake.

Lydia, Dorcas, and Phoebe, witnesses to the faith

Wednesday, January 27, 2021

Women as well as men were important Christian leaders from the beginning, as demonstrated by these coworkers of the apostle Paul. Lydia, a seller of purple goods, lent her home for a church; Dorcas was known for charitable works; and Phoebe was a deacon in the church at Cenchrae.

Thomas Aquinas, teacher, died 1274

Thursday, January 28, 2021

One of the most brilliant and creative theologians in the church's history, Aquinas worked to bring together scripture and the philosophy of Aristotle. A member of the Order of Preachers (Dominicans), Aquinas was also a hymnwriter.

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