



Hosanna

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SUNDAY LITURGY

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4TH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

Year C

ENTRANCE ANTIphon

Save us, O Lord our God! And gather us from the nations, to give thanks to your holy name, and make it our glory to praise you. Cf. (Ps 105:47)

COLLECT

Grant us, Lord our God, that we may honour you with our mind, and love everyone in truth of heart. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

FIRST READING

A prophet is a person ahead of his or her times. He or she will naturally be accepted by some but misunderstood and rejected by the majority. It is usually only after their deaths that prophets are recognized and honoured. But during their life, they face extreme difficulties, and are able to survive only because the Lord himself gives them strength and fortitude.

A reading from the Book of Jeremiah 1:4-5, 17-19.

The word of the Lord came to me saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.

But you, gird up your loins; arise, and say to them everything that I command you. Do not be dismayed by them, lest I dismay you before them. And I, behold, I make you this day a fortified city, an iron pillar, and bronze walls, against the whole land – against the kings of Judah, its princes, its priests, and the people of the land. They will fight against you; but they shall not prevail against you, for I am with you, says the Lord, to deliver you."

Responsorial Psalm 71:1-2, 3-4a. 5-6ab, 15,17

R. (cf. v 15) **My lips will tell of your help.**

In you, O Lord, I take refuge; let me never be put to shame. In your justice rescue me, free me: pay heed to me and save me.

R. **My lips will tell of your help.**

Be a rock where I can take refuge, a mighty stronghold to save me; for you are my rock, my stronghold. Free me from the hand of the wicked.

R. **My lips will tell of your help.**

It is you, O Lord, who are my hope, my trust O Lord, since my youth. On you I have leaned from my birth, from my mother's womb you have been my help.

R. **My lips will tell of your help.**

My lips will tell of your justice and day by day of your help. O God, you have taught me from my youth and I proclaim your wonders still.

R. My lips will tell of your help.

SECOND READING

Whatever gifts and abilities we have, the greatest of all talents, the greatest of all arts, the greatest of all skills, is love. St. Paul in today's second reading earnestly exhorts us to desire all the gifts of the Spirit, but above all, to seek love, which will make all the other gifts useful and meaningful.

A reading from the First Letter of St Paul to the Corinthians. 12:31-13:1-13

Earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way. If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. "Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends; as for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect; but when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a

child; when I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood. So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

ALLELUIA Jn 1:12-14

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us; to all who received him he gave power to become children of God.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL READING

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St Luke 4:21-30

Jesus began to say to all in the synagogue, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." And all spoke well of him, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth; and they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" And he said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Physician, heal yourself; what we have heard you did at Capernaum, do here also in your own country'." And he said, "Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his own country. But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when there came a great famine over all the land; and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian." When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. And they rose

up and put him out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw him down headlong. But passing through the midst of them he went away.

HOMILY

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PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Celebrant: In today's Gospel, the crowd could not bear to hear the words of Jesus, because their minds were not open to the truth. Perhaps there are times when God speaks to us, and we refuse to listen because his message is too hard for us to bear. Let us pray for the gift of being open to the truth, so that we can be more receptive to the message that God has for us.

Response: Lord, hear our prayer.

1. We pray that our religious leaders may always be good listeners, so that they can hear the voice of God and the voice of the people, and respond to it positively even when it is difficult. We pray for Pope Francis, and for all the bishops and priests, that by their greater openness, they may also become more convincing witnesses to the message of the Gospel. We pray to the Lord...

2. We pray for our families, that there may be a culture of dialogue and communication in our homes. Let us pray that families may find time to sit together and share their views, their joys and their sorrows in a spirit of acceptance and love, without anyone feeling threatened or insecure. We pray to the Lord...

3. We ask God to make our political leaders more responsive to the voice of God and the voice of the people. May they hear the cry of the poor, and may they always

be open to suggestions from the citizens, so that all can work together for the common good. We pray to the Lord...

4. We pray that Catholics may remain faithful to the Lord in times of difficulty, and not give in to pressure when society is going in a different direction. May we receive our moral instructions from God's word and God's Spirit, and may we be ready to stand up for truth and justice even when others are opposed to it. We pray to the Lord...

5. St. Paul teaches to walk in the way of love. May we always be guided by the Spirit of love, so that we can be more Christ-like in our attitudes and our actions. In Jesus' name, may we use all our gifts and abilities in the service of God and of our neighbour. We pray to the Lord...

Celebrant: Hear our prayers, O Loving Father, and in your kindness, show us the way to move forward in faithfulness and love. Help us to be committed to the values of the Kingdom, even in times of difficulty, and may we do it with a spirit of gentleness and peace, so that all people may see in us the sign of Christ's presence, for he is Lord for ever and ever. Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

O Lord, we bring to your altar these offerings of our service: be pleased to receive them, we pray, and transform them into the Sacrament of our redemption. Through Christ our Lord.

COMMUNION ANTIphon

*Let your face shine on your servant.
Save me in your merciful love. O
Lord, let me never be put to shame,
for I call on you. Ps 30:17-18*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourished by these redeeming gifts, we pray, O Lord, that through this help to eternal salvation true faith may ever increase. Through Christ our Lord.

REFLECTION

Why did Jesus' hearers get angry with his words? The answer lies in Jesus' choice of examples from the Old Testament. Jesus quoted the stories of Elijah and Elisha. Both of them were rejected by a number of people in Israel, and instead, on occasion, worked their miracles for outsiders and foreigners. By citing these gigantic figures of Israel's past, Jesus is apparently claiming that he too will follow in their footsteps. We must remember that this is a continuation of Jesus' very first sermon, of which we heard the beginning last week. The first part of his sermon ended in a positive note, with people speaking highly of him. However, as his sermon progressed, people began to question him on the grounds that he was just a carpenter's son. Further, the people seem to have been quite disappointed when Jesus turned to the subject of the prophets of the past and the experiences they went through. When Jesus gave examples of non-Jews who received blessings

through the prophets, the crowd suddenly decided that they had had enough, and they decided that Jesus needed to be punished for his claims. By their reaction, the crowd did not realise that they were actually fulfilling the words of Jesus! They showed him that they would reject him just as their ancestors had rejected the previous prophets. They also showed him that the Gospel would be more successful among Gentiles than among the Jewish people. So we see that the Good News that Jesus preaches, is bad news for some. It is bad news for those who think that they are privileged and specially chosen. It is bad news for those who cannot bear to listen to a poor man, a carpenter's son. It is bad news for those who are selfish and do not wish to share God's blessings with other nations. In today's world, however, we sometimes come up with a simpler solution – we welcome the messenger but reject the message. We give Jesus beautiful garlands and decorations, we spend hours praising and adoring him, but that does not necessarily mean we accept his teachings. May we never think that religion is a matter of formalities and ceremonies; rather, religion means that we allow the Word of God to touch us and transform our lives.

- Rev. Fr. Chris Vimalraj

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