

Third Sunday Ordinary Time 2020 Year A

26 Readings: no. 67, p. 443; BG, p. 267 1st Reading: Isaiah 9.1-4 2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 1.10-13, 17-18 Gospel: Matthew 4.12-23 3rd
SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Brothers and sisters, a call resonates from out of today's readings to be a people who walk enlightened and together. "How blessed are we, that God has chosen in His goodness and wisdom to reveal Himself."¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word became flesh. God speaks creation into being from out of nothingness. We are like letters in God's sentences designed with purpose to spell love.

However, communication with God, and one another are sometimes not very legible? There is no quicker path to ambiguity, division, and broken relationship than miscommunication. It is the Holy Spirit's hand we must call upon to guide our narrative? Holy Scripture friends recounts a journey graciously gifted to human perception. So precious are our Sacred Scriptures, that their reading and listening, humble us to tears. A people who loose touch with their story, are a people soon divided and easily conquered.

Our story is passed on generationally from both the First and New Testaments accounts. Our very identify, as brothers and sisters in Christ, is understood through a deep awareness of Scripture.

¹ Dogmatic Constitution of the Catholic Church, (1965) Vatican II, Article II

We don't worship text or a manuscript, but we do glorify the complete revelation of God, we see manifested in the Son. Filled and moved by the Holy Spirit, we hold fast to Sacred Scripture with deep affection. Jesus is the Trinity's Perfect Word, begotten of the Father and the light alongside, with whom we journey home together. We speak to God in prayer and listen to the Divine voice when attentive to Scripture.

A couple are walking in Silver Springs when a stranger join them. The stranger enjoys a playful time gradually disclosing his identity. So, the pair heading to St Peter's invite their emerging friend into their special home, and more importantly into their hearts. Prepared is a beautifully meal, complete with candles, wonderful music and great conversation. Everything needed to joyfully and comfortably learn about one another! The lights begin to brighten, and the couple learning that the stranger is actually their brother, break with deep emotion. I wonder, Brothers and Sisters, will not our hearts, again burn warmly as Jesus speaks to us through this Liturgy of the Word and opens for us the Sacred Scriptures?

The Book of Hebrews gives a tidy synopsis of how we are to understand Jesus, who is the Word of God, saying.

At many moments in the past and by multiple means, God speaks to our ancestors through the prophets; but in our time, the final days, he has spoken to us in the person of his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things and through whom he made the ages. He is the reflection of God's glory and bears the impress of God's own being, sustaining all things by his powerful command; and now that he has purged sins away, he has taken his seat at the right hand of the divine Majesty on high.²

Friends, how we come to know Jesus, God's complete expression is through sacramental invitation to Holy Scripture. As Peter, Andrew, James and John come to know Jesus intimately so too can followers today. St. Jerome, is famously quoted with saying, "Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ." The Bible friends is not an optional luxury Catholics choose. It is our obligation to spend time in study with Sacred Scripture. We might consider *Lectio Divina* or ("Divine Reading") which is structured around reading, meditating; praying; and contemplation. The Church's Divine Office is another devotion not only of the clergy and religious, but moreover, the entire faithful are encouraged to engage. Pilgrimage can also reveal the Sacred.

² From the Book of Hebrews, chapter 1 1:4.

Bishops, Priests, Deacons, Lectors, Extraordinary Ministers of Communion, and Catechists, it is most important that the Word of God, we promulgate, is directed as much from our heart, as from our tongue.

With a week of prayer for Christian unity ending this weekend, Pope Francis calls on the faithful to connect more intimately with exercises that advance us deeper into the Word of God. Remember, the words spoken at each Mass come from Sacred Scripture and we do proper to understand their context. Welcomed with invitory and penitential rites, liturgical attention next emerges from this Table of the Word. An account from the prophets, a Psalm from David, an Apostolic letter, and climatically the Gospel. Four passages from which to teach and nourish us! A homiletic prayer and reflection prepare us to re-affirm our faith. The petitions of a troubled world are gathered and raised to God, drawing to a close our liturgy of the Word. We collect in diversity but leave for the Table of Eucharist more united. It is always far more important that we be united than individually correct or even that accurate.

Well after many years alone on a deserted island in the North Atlantic, a forgotten scribe is finally visited by his superior. The superior general notices that the monk has instead built two churches, and wonders for an explanation. The holy monk points to one, saying, “That’s the one I go to”, and to the other, “That’s the one I don’t go to”. Friends, may we unite and recommit to knowing and collecting around Jesus through Sacred Scripture and by our participation in this Holy Eucharist.

Amen