

OCTOBER 6, 2021
Wednesday of the 27th Week in Ordinary Time
Luke 11: 1-4

“LIVE AS CHILDREN OF GOD THE FATHER.”

Prophet Jonah is a reluctant prophet. He fled to every God's invitation until such time that he decided to take His invitation: to be a prophet to Ninivites. Jonah can be one of us: not following the will of God, denying His call for us to be part of the big plan, that is, salvation for all or avoiding Him through act of disobedience, sins and deceit.

Jonah was so angry with God because He 'favors' the Ninivites, Gentiles of the land over the chosen people of Israel. He saw wicked and sinful Ninivites but not the Lord who sees them like children who need guidance, love, compassion to bring them to right and proper direction. We can also be like that sometimes: we see others' sinfulness and ugliness but not their goodness and kindness, little it may be. "The message of the story is clear. It says that God's compassion reaches out to every single person. Jonah, representing a certain class of Israelite, whom we see later in the Gospel, could not extend God's compassion to the Gentile. Jonah and his countrymen traditionally rejoiced in God's special mercies to Israel but wished only his wrath on their enemies. God here rebukes such hardness and proclaims his own graciousness. And this is the lesson of tolerance. It is a lesson that others besides God's chosen people can be forgiven their sin, that they can repent of their sin, that they can be open to the influence of God and do good things. In this book we are very close to the spirit of the New Testament where Jesus comes to save and not to condemn. The first Christians were all Jews and it came as something of a surprise to them that Gentiles could receive and respond to the Spirit of Jesus just as well as they could. Jonah is a book attacking narrow-minded bigotry and sectarianism. As such its message is still all too relevant in a world where cynics say that the world would be better off without religions which are the source of so much suffering, violence and divisiveness. Let us remove all bigotry and intolerance from our Christian

lives. Let us rejoice to see the Spirit working in other people and be happy to work with them to bring about the Kingdom.”¹ We are all called to be sons and daughters of the Father through our lives serving our brothers and sisters. The prayer of the Our Father is a testimony that we can approach God with confidence. He is always with us, listening and giving what we need for us to become a better person. “When we ask God for help, he fortunately does not give us what we deserve. Instead, he responds with grace and mercy. He is kind and forgiving towards us and he expects us to treat our neighbor the same. We can pray with expectant faith because our heavenly Father truly loves each one of us and he treats us as his beloved children. He delights to give us what is good. His love and grace transforms us and makes us like himself. Through his grace and power we can love and serve one another as Jesus taught - with grace, mercy, and loving-kindness.”² So, let us treat one another with grace and mercy, and always ready to forgive others as the Lord Jesus forgives us.

¹ livingspace.sacredspace.ie

² www.dailyscripture.net