



SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Year A

Isaiah 49:3, 5-6

Psalm 40:2, 4, 7-8a, 8b-9, 10

1 Corinthians 1:1-3

John 1:29-34

Gathering¹

(An unlit candle, a bible open to this week's gospel and the figure of a lamb from a nativity set or an Easter card with the image of Jesus as victorious lamb rest on a table covered with a green cloth.)

If new members are joining the community, some time is taken for people to become acquainted, and for newcomers to learn something about the history of the community. All share their hopes and expectations about being a part of a small church community.)

We continue last week's commemoration of the baptism of the Lord with John the Baptist's testimony to Jesus according to the gospel of John. The mission of Jesus begins.

Prayer

(The unlit candle is lit. Members are invited to a minute of silence to acknowledge God with them. After a time of quiet, members join in singing

“When John Baptized by Jordan’s River.” The song may be found on the Internet In When the song is complete, the prayer continues as follows.)

Leader: Here am I LORD; I come to do your will.

All: Here am I Lord; I come to do your will.

Leader: I have waited, waited for the LORD
and he stooped toward me and heard my cry.
And he put a new song into my mouth
a hymn to our God.

All: Here am I Lord; I come to do your will.

Leader: Sacrifice or offering, you wished not
but ears open to obedience you gave me.
Holocausts or sin offerings you sought not;
then said I, “Behold I come.”

All: Here am I Lord; I come to do your will.

Psalm 40:2, 4, 7-8

HEARING THE LORD’S GOSPEL

(The scriptures are proclaimed aloud with a pause after each reading. Following a pause after the proclamation of the gospel, the leader invites members to name a word or phrase from the gospel that stays with them, but without any additional comment. Some may repeat what another has already said.)

When this naming is complete, the leader passes out copies of the scriptures of the week as needed.¹ Pausing between them, the leader then poses these two questions: “What draws you to this gospel?” “Where do you resist this gospel?” The community pauses for a time of silent reflection. After about a minute, the leader invites members to consider the Reflection and Questions for the week. After a time for silent reflection, the leader invites members to re-arrange themselves in groups of three or four for sharing. The small groups move off so as not to intrude on one another.)

¹ Unless members use bibles or missalettes, copies of the scriptures of the week are available from the website of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops: www.usccb.org/nab/

Reflection

One of the strengths of our faith is that it is rooted in history. Our God acts for us in time and space. John the Baptist and Jesus Christ are real people who lived in a particular time and place. In and through Jesus of Nazareth, God's saving action is at work in the deeds and words of Jesus in a way that permeates all of history.

This week we continue to celebrate the *baptism* of Jesus, except that in this week's gospel, in contrast to the other evangelists, John does not actually describe the baptism. He speaks rather of John the Baptist's testimony to Jesus. We recall the baptism of Jesus at this time each year because it marks the inauguration of Jesus' mission to the world. It reminds us that his call is ours as well. We are called to manifest God's saving love in time and space.

The Third Song of Isaiah emphasizes that the suffering servant is to be a *light* for all people not just the chosen people. It is fitting that Vatican II's, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* begins with the words, *Lumen Gentium*, "light for the world." In our day and age, the whole church and each of us, personally, are called to bring the light of Christ to the world.

We must manifest Christ to the world not only with words, but with deeds rooted in time and space. Like St. Paul, we must take seriously our call to discipleship. With what concrete words and deeds do you manifest Christ to the world about you?

Questions for Reflection and Conversation

- ◆ How consciously do you think of yourself as a disciple?
- ◆ Describe a concrete event in time and space that has served to manifest Christ to you?
- ◆ With what concrete words and deeds do you manifest Christ to the world about you?
- ◆ "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." We hear these words at each Eucharist. How central is the supper of the Lamb in your life?

HEARING THE GOSPEL'S LORD

(After about fifteen minutes of sharing in threes/fours, the leader re-gathers the community. Once back together, members pause for a moment. The leader then poses these questions: “What do you want to hold on to for yourself from this session?” “How are you/we being called to live in response to God’s word?” After a pause, the leader invites the community to a time of conversation. When this sharing is complete, the community moves to a time of prayer.)

Response in Action Suggestions¹

- ◆ Set aside ten minutes each day this week for reflection and prayer. Be in touch with one action for the day ahead that you can name for yourself as a concrete discipleship action you will implement.
- ◆ Feeding the hungry is basic discipleship work. Check out the work of Bread for the World at www.bread.org. Learn how you might invite fellow parishioners to participate in Bread’s 2014 *Offering of Letters* to members of Congress encouraging them to act to end global hunger.

Prayer

(After a brief pause, the gospel or a portion of it, either of the other readings as appropriate or the responsorial psalm are proclaimed. The idea is to select a text that lends itself to inviting members to the time of silent prayer that follows. Following the proclamation, the leader poses these questions to the members: “What does Christ in his Spirit say to you now?” “What do you say to him in response?” The community pauses for a full five minutes of prayerful attention to God. A brief instrumental selection may be played during part of this time. After this time of silence, the leader invites members simply to mention a word or two, or a brief expression that captures what they hear Christ saying to them personally. The community receives this without additional comment.

Following this sharing, the leader and several members invoke the prayers that follow. To each prayer, members respond, "Lord, hear us!"

- Leader: Let us call out to our God in our need praying - Lord, hear us!
- I: Show us your goodness present in every creature, that we may contemplate your glory everywhere, we pray...
- II: Do not allow us to be overcome by evil today, but grant that we may overcome evil through the power of good, we pray...
- III: You were baptized in the Jordan and anointed by the Holy Spirit, grant that we may this day give thanks to your Holy Spirit, we pray...

Liturgy of the Hours, Morning Prayer,
Sunday Week II.

(Members offer additional prayers of praise, thanksgiving or petition as they wish.)

- Leader: Grant that what we ask for in faith we may receive with thanksgiving through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Members exchange a sign of peace.)