

## **JAN. 31, 2010 FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY**

### **INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY**

*The glory of God is often revealed when and where it is least expected. God uses our lips to declare that glory, inexperienced and hesitant though they may be. God uses our love to demonstrate that glory and so urges us to exercise it. God uses Jesus of Nazareth, water and the word, bread and wine, to reveal God's glory where and when God chooses. Take heed, lest the glory of God slip through our midst unnoticed.*

*After a moment of silent meditation to prepare ourselves for worship,  
we will begin the liturgy.*

### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Drawn to the light of Christ, made bold in the waters of baptism, and filled with the Spirit, we lift up our prayers in confidence that God loves and listens to us.

*A brief silence.*

God of gracious love, sustain your church; strengthen its leaders and all the baptized. Put your word in our mouths and fill us with the courage to proclaim it. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

God of creative love, sustain the world you made. Create in us respect for the things you have made for us so that we might be trustworthy guardians of all your gifts. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

God of abundant love, sustain the nations of the world. Bring peace where there is strife and warfare. Make clear the reflection of you in the faces of our enemies. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

God of healing love, sustain those who are hurting, tired, sick, or suffering (*especially*). Sustain those who are poor, homeless, or hungry. Grant your blessing to those who minister and care for them. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

God of refreshing love, sustain this congregation and all who gather together in this place. Renew our ministries with a sense of purpose and passion. Let your Spirit lead us in our work. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

God of redeeming love, sustain those who grieve as you sustain all the saints who now sit at your table in heaven. Nourish us with your grace until we are reunited at your table. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Good and gracious God, we ask all these things and whatever else you see that we need with a sure and certain hope in your goodness and mercy, through Jesus Christ our Savior.  
**Amen.**

**Lector: Please read the introduction, then the citation (i.e., "The First Reading is from..... chapter of ....., verses ....." then the text. )**

**FIRST READING-**      *God calls Jeremiah to be a prophet and consecrates him in the womb. Jeremiah's task is to preach God's word in the midst of the difficult political realities of his time, before the Babylonian exile. He is to make God known not only to Judah, but also to the nations.*

Jeremiah 1:4–10

Now 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."

Then I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy." But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a boy'; for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and you shall speak whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the LORD."  
Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the LORD said to me, "Now I have put my words in your mouth. See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant."

The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM** Psalm 71:1–6

In you, O LORD, have I taken refuge;  
let me never be put to shame.

**In your righteousness, deliver me and set me free;  
incline your ear to me and save me.**

Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe;  
you are my crag and my stronghold.

**Deliver me, my God, from the hand of the wicked,  
from the clutches of the evildoer and the oppressor.**

For you are my hope, O Lord GOD,  
my confidence since I was young.

**I have been sustained by you ever since I was born; from my mother's womb you have been my strength;  
my praise shall be always of you.**

**SECOND READING** - *Christians in Corinth prided themselves on their spiritual gifts. Paul reminds them that God gives us many gifts through the Holy Spirit, but the purpose behind all of them is love, the kind of love that God showed us in Jesus Christ.*

1 Corinthians 13:1–13

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have 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 do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

\* **GOSPEL READING** - *People in Jesus' hometown are initially pleased when he says that God will free the oppressed. Their pleasure turns to rage when he reminds them that God's prophetic mission typically pushes beyond human boundaries so that mercy and healing are extended to those regarded as outsiders.*

Luke 4:21–30

Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" He said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Doctor, cure yourself!' And you will say, 'Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.'" And he said, "Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's hometown. But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian." When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**