

January 22nd, 2010 Third Sunday of Epiphany

Introduction to the Day

Stories of the call to discipleship continue as the Time after Epiphany plays out the implications of our baptismal calling to show Christ to the world. Jesus begins proclaiming the good news and calling people to repentance right after John the Baptist is arrested for preaching in a similar way. Knowing that John was later executed, we see at the very outset the cost of discipleship. Still, the two sets of fisherman brothers leave everything they have known and worked for all their lives to follow Jesus and fish for people.

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

Prayers of the People

As God's beloved people made radiant by the light of Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human family, and God's good creation.

A brief silence.

Steadfast God, you call all people to turn to you and believe in the good news. Cast the net of your love over the earth, and make us willing messengers of your salvation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God our stronghold, you will never be shaken, and your sustaining presence holds all creation in life. Protect endangered species and fragile ecosystems, and give hope to those who labor on behalf of the environment. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of refuge, the cities of the world cry out for peace. Create new ways for enemies to be reconciled, and end the cycle of violence that perpetuates war. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of deliverance, we pour out our hearts on behalf of those in need. Bring to safety those who flee from war, poverty, and famine. We lift to you all who suffer from natural disasters. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God who meets us in silence, you are near to those who wait. We pray for all who long for healing from addiction, despair, and illness. Comfort the dying and ease their passing. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Eternal God, you fulfill all things. We give thanks for our brothers and sisters in Christ who have died, and we rejoice that you will be with us when this world passes away. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Holy God, we lift our prayers to you in hope, entrusting all for whom we pray to your great goodness and mercy, made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

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

First Reading – *The book of Jonah is a comedy starring a reluctant prophet who is given a one-sentence message: Nineveh will be destroyed in forty days. Much to Jonah's dismay, the people of Nineveh repent. The point of the story is to get the reader to wrestle with the question "On whom should God have mercy?"*

Jonah 3:1–5, 10

The word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time, saying, Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you. So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days' walk across. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's walk. And he cried out, "Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth.

When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM Psalm 65:5-12

For God alone I wait in silence;
truly, my hope is in God.

**God alone is my rock and my salvation,
my stronghold, so that I shall never be shaken.**

In God is my deliverance and my honor;
God is my strong rock and my refuge.

**Put your trust in God always, O people,
pour out your hearts before the one who is our refuge.**

Those of high degree are but a fleeting breath;
those of low estate cannot be trusted.

Placed on the scales together they weigh even less than a breath.

**Put no trust in extortion; in robbery take no empty pride;
though wealth increase, set not your heart upon it.**

God has spoken once, twice have I heard it,
that power belongs to God.

**Steadfast love belongs to you, O Lord,
for you repay all according to their deeds.**

Second Reading - *Paul does not disapprove of marriage or other human social institutions. He does, however, want Christians to live in the present in fervent anticipation of God's future, which even now has dawned through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.*

1 Corinthians 7:29–31

I mean, brothers and sisters, the appointed time has grown short; from now on, let even those who have wives be as though they had none, and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no possessions, and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

* **Gospel Reading** - *Before Jesus calls his first disciples, he proclaims a message that becomes known as "the gospel" or good news from God. God is ready to rule our lives. Those who realize this will respond with repentance and faith.*

Mark 1:14–20

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near, repent, and believe in the good news."

As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea — for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.