Follow me,” Jesus calls out in today's Gospel. He summons us as well, and his call is challenging. Being a disciple means putting aside one’s own personal concerns. It also means following Jesus no matter how difficult. Up until now, Jesus spent his time preaching, teaching, and healing around Galilee. But now Jesus has set off for Jerusalem. Though the disciples don’t realize it, he has embarked on the journey that leads to the cross. Let us pray for the strength and courage to continue to follow our Lord, no matter the cost, realizing that our reward is the kingdom of God.

As we gather let us begin our service by professing what we believe.

**Profession of Faith p. 104**

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, (bow as we say) and by the Holy Spirit he was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**Introductory Rite:**

**Greeting:**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be God forever. **Blessed be God forever.**

**Penitential Rite:** p.6

My brothers and sisters, to prepare ourselves for this celebration, let us call to mind our sins.

I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen**

**Opening Prayer:**

O God, who through the grace of adoption chose us to be children of light, grant, we pray, that we may not be wrapped in the darkness of error but always be seen to stand in the bright light of truth.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**Liturgy of the Word:**

**First Reading p. 76**

A reading from the first Book of Kings

The LORD said to Elijah: "You shall anoint Elisha, son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah, as prophet to succeed you."
Elijah set out and came upon Elisha, son of Shaphat, as he was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen; he was following the twelfth. Elijah went over to him and threw his cloak over him. Elisha left the oxen, ran after Elijah, and said, "Please, let me kiss my father and mother goodbye, and I will follow you." Elijah answered, "Go back! Have I done anything to you?" Elisha left him, and taking the yoke of oxen, slaughtered them; he used the plowing equipment for fuel to boil their flesh, and gave it to his people to eat. Then Elisha left and followed Elijah as his attendant.

The word of the Lord.

**Responsorial Psalm:**

R/. You are my inheritance, O Lord.

**Psalm 16:1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11**

R/. You are my inheritance, O Lord.

Keep me, O God, for in you I take refuge; I say to the LORD, "My Lord are you. O LORD, my allotted portion and my cup, you it is who hold fast my lot." R/. I bless the LORD who counsels me; even in the night my heart exhorts me. I set the LORD ever before me; with him at my right hand I shall not be disturbed. R/. Therefore my heart is glad and my soul rejoices, my body, too, abides in confidence because you will not abandon my soul to the netherworld, nor will you suffer your faithful one to undergo corruption. R/. You will show me the path to life, fullness of joys in your presence, the delights at your right hand forever. R/. Second Reading:

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Galatians

**Galatians 5:1, 13-18**

Brothers and sisters: For freedom Christ set us free; so stand firm and do not submit again to the yoke of slavery. For you were called for freedom, brothers and sisters. But do not use this freedom as an opportunity for the flesh; rather, serve one another through love. For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement, namely, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. But if you go on biting and devouring one another, beware that you are not consumed by one another.

I say, then: live by the Spirit and you will certainly not gratify the desire of the flesh. For the flesh has desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; these are opposed to each other, so that you may not do what you want. But if you are guided by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

The word of the Lord.

**Gospel:**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

**Luke 9:51-62**

Glory to you, O Lord

When the days for Jesus' being taken up were fulfilled, he resolutely determined to journey to Jerusalem, and he sent messengers ahead of him. On the way they entered a Samaritan village to prepare for his reception there, they would not welcome him because the destination of his journey was Jerusalem. When the disciples James and John saw this they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call down fire from heaven to consume them?" Jesus turned and rebuked them, and they journeyed to another village.

As they were proceeding on their journey someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus answered him, "Foxes have dens and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head."
And to another he said, "Follow me." But he replied, "Lord, let me go first and bury my father." But he answered him, "Let the dead bury their dead. But you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." And another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say farewell to my family at home." To him Jesus said, "No one who sets a hand to the plow and looks to what was left behind is fit for the kingdom of God."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection on the Word:
• God told Elijah to anoint Elisha as his successor, so when he saw Elisha he threw his cloak over him. The Hebrew word translated here as “cloak” is often translated as “mantle.” Therefore, Elisha literally assumed the mantle of prophet. The mantle became a visible sign of his authority as he went on to speak in the LORD’s name. We received a mantle ourselves in baptism: the mantle of the Holy Spirit, who cloaks us with God’s protection and guidance as we live out our faith in the world.

• In the Gospel, James and John reference the time when Elijah called down fire from heaven to consume two regiments of King Ahaziah’s. You see, the unfaithful Ahaziah ruled Israel from Samaria, so this event naturally came to mind when, centuries hence, the Samaritan village turned them away. Not only did Jesus call for mercy today, later on his way to Jerusalem, he tells the parable of the good Samaritan. The kingdom of God is open to all, from those who are willing to follow the Lord at once to those who initially refuse to welcome him.

• It’s easy to be sidetracked. We know we should be weeding the garden or planning that presentation, but we get distracted by conversations online or the game on TV. Before you know it, we’ve wasted an hour or two. Our commitment to following the Lord can get similarly sidetracked. Perhaps we need a reminder like the one Paul gave the Galatians—love your neighbor—in order to focus on our collective goal, God’s kingdom. When we volunteer to help those in need or take the time to speak out against injustice, we strengthen our commitment as Christ’s disciples.

Question of the Week
What can I put aside this week that distracts me from living out my faith? What can I do to express my commitment to the Lord?

Prayer of the Faithful:
Saint Paul reminds the Galatians that they must love their neighbor as themselves. Our love of neighbor inspires us to pray for our neighbors in need of God’s grace.

• For the Church, the body of Christ, that our eyes may always be focused on the kingdom of God as we strive to bring the fruit of God’s reign alive in our world, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

• For world leaders, that they may find constructive and productive ways to settle differences without resorting to violence and war, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

• That we all may be attentive to the Lord’s call in our lives, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

• For those who suffer from the summer’s heat, especially those with inadequate shelter or none at all, that they may be protected from harm, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

• For all those at a crossroads in their lives, that they may recognize the movement of the Holy Spirit and be willing to be guided by the Spirit, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

• For what else should we pray? **Lord, hear our prayer.**
For all the prayers that we hold in the silence of our hearts; for all our intentions spoken and unspoken, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

 Faithful God, your Son resolutely journeyed to Jerusalem, driven to do your will. Bend our own reluctant wills as we journey to your kingdom, guided by the Spirit. Grant this and all our prayers through him who showed us the way, your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Communion Rite**

*The Lord’s Prayer: p. 136*

Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Savior gave us.

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

**Rite of Peace:**

The sign of peace outwardly expresses a deep spiritual reality; through this sign we acknowledge Christ’s presence in each other and share the peace we have received from Him. Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

**Communion:**

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

**Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.**

The body of Christ. **Amen.**

**Prayer after Communion:**

May this divine sacrifice we have offered and received fill us with life, O Lord, we pray, so that, bound to you in lasting charity, we may bear fruit that lasts forever.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Concluding Rite:**

**Final Blessing:**

May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

Go in the peace of Christ! **Thanks be to God.**