

Suggested Opening Song: Gather Us In, #214

In today's Gospel, we hear Jesus call his first disciples. "Come after me," he calls out to the first two. "Follow me," he says to two more. We are the ones Jesus calls out to now. Today is the Sunday of the Word of God, the day Pope Francis chose to dedicate to the proclamation, the study, and the celebration of the scriptures. The call of the first disciples also reminds us of Jesus' own words. His words invite us to a deeper commitment, to one like Peter and Andrew and James and John made with him. May the word of God inspire us to enter our discipleship more deeply.

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

Profession of Faith p. 144

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. 12

Brothers and sisters, let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to participate in this sacred celebration.

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:

Almighty ever-living God, direct our actions according to your good pleasure, that in the name of your beloved Son we may abound in good works.

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

Liturgy of the Word:

First Reading p. 92

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

Isaiah 8:23---9:3

First the Lord degraded the land of Zebulum and the land of Naphtali; but in the end he has glorified the seaward road, the land west of the Jordan, the District of the Gentiles. Anguish has taken wing, dispelled is darkness: for there is no gloom where but now there was distress. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone. You have brought them abundant joy and great rejoicing, as they rejoice before you as at the harvest, as people make merry when dividing spoils. For the yoke that burdened them, the pole on their shoulder, and the rod of their taskmaster you have smashed, as on the day of Midian.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 27:1,4,13-14

R/. The Lord is my light and my salvation.

R/. The Lord is my light and my salvation.

The Lord is my light and my salvation; / whom should I fear?

The Lord is my life's refuge; / of whom should I be afraid? **R/.**

One thing I ask of the Lord; / this I seek:

To dwell in the house of the Lord / all the days of my life,

That I may gaze on the loveliness of the Lord / and contemplate his temple. **R/.**

I believe that I shall see the bounty of the Lord / in the land of the living.

Wait for the Lord with courage; / be stouthearted, and wait for the Lord. **R/.**

Second Reading

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

1 Corinthians 1:10-13,17

I urge you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree in what you say, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and in the same purpose. For it has been reported to me about you, my brothers and sisters, by Chloe's people, that there are rivalries among you. I mean that each of you is saying, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with the wisdom of human eloquence, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its meaning.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Matthew 4:12-23

Glory to you, O Lord

When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what had been said through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled: *Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people who sit in darkness have seen a great light, on those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death light has arisen.* From that time on, Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

As he was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea; they were fishermen. He said to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." At once they left their nets and followed him. He walked along from there and saw two other brothers,

James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat, with their father Zebedee, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left their boat and their father and followed him. He went around all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness among the people.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection on the Word:

- Interestingly, when Jesus begins his mission and goes out to call disciples, he does not go to Jerusalem, to the temple, or to a synagogue at all. No, he goes down to the shores of the Sea of Galilee. As he told religious authorities later, he came to call sinners, not the righteous. Therefore, he chooses to go down to the sea to walk among sailors and fishers, not up to the synagogue to find those at prayer. When you wonder whether you are being called by the Lord and think yourself to be unworthy, know that you *are* unworthy. But this is exactly why Jesus is calling you.
- By our baptism, we are each called to be disciples of the Lord. We are called to follow Jesus. What do we see when we follow him? We see him “teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness among the people” (Matthew 4:23). When he later sends out his disciples in pairs, these are the things he calls upon them to do. We are Jesus’ hands and voices now, called to spread the gospel, to teach lessons by word and deed, to bring healing to the afflicted, and to care for those in need. Today we hear how he sets an example for the first disciples . . . and for his current disciples.
- Saint Paul urges the Corinthians to unity in Christ. The problem Paul addresses is not one of diversity, for indeed Paul initiated diversity by proselytizing in cities and towns all over the Mediterranean, where he encountered many different cultures, languages, and traditions. No, the problem was divisiveness and rivalries. Corinthians were allying with the person who introduced them to Christ, rather than with Christ himself. The church, Paul realized, must be one, and be one in Christ.

Question of the Week

The first disciples left their old lives behind to follow Jesus. What is Jesus calling me to leave behind?

Prayer of the Faithful:

United in the same mind and in the same purpose, we bring our needs with the needs of our sisters and brothers all over the world and offer them to the Lord.

- For the Church, that we may shine a light on poverty, injustice, and neglect, so that the world notices the plight of those living in the gloom of those conditions and spurs a movement to alleviate the darkness, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- That world leaders may lift the yokes that burden those who are oppressed, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For students, teachers, and staff of Catholic schools, that every day they may learn something new that heightens their curiosity about the world and their growth as the Lord’s disciples, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For women religious worldwide, who have responded to the call of discipleship by nurturing and using their talents in order to serve others more fully, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

- For those murdered in the Holocaust, that their memory may spur us to stand up against evil and genocide, and may change the hearts of those filled with hate, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For what else should we pray? Let us pray to the Lord. **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.**

God of life, your Son calls us to follow him, promising us that your kingdom is at hand. Hear the prayers we make today on behalf of all those who long for a kingdom of mercy and love and grant them according to your will, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Communion Rite

The Lord's Prayer: p. 180

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.

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:

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that, receiving the grace by which you bring us to new life, we may always glory in your gift.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Concluding Rite:

Final Blessing:

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

Go in peace! **Thanks be to God.**

Suggested Closing Song: Make Us True Servants, #225