



CELEBRATING AT HOME
3RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

The light shines (Matthew 4:12-23)



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Sign of the Cross

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

Amen.

The Lord is here, present among us.

We are gathered with the whole Church in this moment of prayer.

Preparing to hear the Word

Lord Jesus,

you are our light and our salvation.

Christ Jesus,

you bring us Good News of love and forgiveness.

Lord Jesus,

you call us to follow you.

Scripture Reading (*Matthew 4: 12-23*)

Hearing that John had been arrested, Jesus went back to Galilee, and leaving Nazareth he went and settled in Capernaum, a lakeside town on the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali. In this way the prophecy of Isaiah was to be fulfilled:

‘Land of Zebulun! Land of Naphtali!
Way of the sea on the far side of Jordan,
Galilee of the nations!
The people that lived in darkness
has seen a great light;
on those who dwell in the land and shadow of death
a light has dawned.’

From that moment Jesus began his preaching with the message, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.’

As he was walking by the Sea of Galilee he saw two brothers, Simon, who was called Peter, and his brother Andrew; they were making a cast in the lake with their net, for they were fishermen. And he said to them, ‘Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.’ And they left their nets at once and followed him. Going on from there he saw another pair of brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John; they were in their boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets,

and he called them. At once, leaving the boat and their father, they followed him.

He went round the whole of Galilee teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom and curing all kinds of diseases and sickness among the people.

Reflection - *The light shines*

Last Sunday’s Gospel served as an introduction to Jesus, the Lamb of God.

The Sunday Gospels between now and the beginning of Lent will use the Sermon on the Mount to help us explore and reflect upon who this Lamb of God is and how we, as disciples, should respond to him. They will unfold for us how Jesus, the Lamb of God, is the source of true peace and how we can find our way to him and to one another – that is, how we can live faithful to the tradition of Jesus.

This Sunday Jesus begins his ministry in an unexpected place – Capernaum in the countryside, not in the holy city, Jerusalem. The familiar Gospel demand: *Repent for the kingdom is close at hand*, is sounded for the first time by Jesus, echoing John the Baptist.

To the ministry of proclaimers of the Kingdom Jesus adds four intimates who will be with him throughout the journey into the light.

The Gospel begs many questions: just what is this Kingdom all about? Who is this Jesus who seems to have the power to compel prosperous, ordinary men to follow him? What does it mean to be ‘fishers of men’? Why does Jesus begin his ministry in an unexpected place? What is this Good News of the Kingdom that Jesus offers?

In all, the Gospel serves not just to tell us about Jesus and what he did, but also to help us reflect on our own experience of Jesus: what does it mean for us also to be called (not just as followers but also as ‘fishers’)? How immediate and life-changing is our response to him? Can we follow him all the way to the cross? How do we proclaim the Good News of the kingdom? How are we healers of people and situations which are part of our lives?

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Prayers of Intercession

May your Word touch us deeply,
as we strive to live as members of your Church.

May our actions and our words,
**heal and help, teach and touch our homes,
our workplaces and our world.**

Help us respond with you love
**to the poverty and hunger of body and spirit
around us.**

Lord's Prayer

Formed by the teaching and example of Jesus,
we pray:

**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.**

Closing Prayer

Eternal God,
give us strength to follow your call,
so that your truth may live in our hearts
and reflect peace to all whom we meet.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen

Blessing

May the Lord bless us and keep us.
May the Lord keep us safe from all evil
and lead us to life everlasting.

Amen.

About Matthew's Gospel

From this Sunday we will read from Matthew's Gospel on the Sundays in Ordinary Time this year. Matthew's Gospel, written about the year 85, is addressed to a community of converted Jews who lived in Syria-Palestine. They were going through a deep identity crisis concerning their past. When they accepted Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah, they continued to go to the synagogue and to observe the law and the ancient traditions. Moreover, they had a certain affinity with the Pharisees, and after the uprising of the Jews in Palestine against the Romans (65 to 72), they and the Pharisees were the only two groups to have survived the Roman oppression which followed.

From the 80s, these Jewish brothers, Pharisees and Christians, only survivors, began to fight among themselves as to who had inherited the promises of the Old Testament. Each claimed to be the inheritors. Gradually, tension grew between them and they began to excommunicate each other. The Christians could no longer attend the synagogue and were cut off from their past. Each group began to regroup: the Pharisees in the synagogue, the Christians in house-churches. This added to the identity problem of the community of Jewish Christians because it raised serious questions in need of urgent solutions. "Who has inherited the promises of the Old Testament, those of the synagogue or those of the church? On whose side is God? Who are really the people of God?"

Now, Matthew writes his Gospel to help these communities overcome their crisis and to find an answer to their problems. His Gospel is, first of all, a Gospel of revelation showing how Jesus is the true Messiah, the new Moses, the culmination of the whole of the history of the Old Testament and its promises. It is also the Gospel of consolation for those who felt excluded and persecuted by their Jewish brothers. Matthew wants to console and help them to overcome the trauma of the split. It is the Gospel of the new practice because it shows the way to achieve a new justice, greater than that of the Pharisees. It is the Gospel of openness and shows that the Good News of God that Jesus brought cannot be hidden, but must be placed on a lampstand so that it may enlighten the lives of all peoples.



Journey into the Light

This resource is presented by the Carmelites for use by individuals, families and small groups as a prayerful celebration of the Word of God to help prepare us to celebrate the Eucharist with our worshipping communities. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. We are also conscious of the many people who, for various reasons including sickness and infirmity, cannot physically attend the Eucharist. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family.



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