

Reader's notes

*'IN THE SCRIPTURES,
BY THE SPIRIT,
MAY WE SEE THE SAVIOURS FACE,
HEAR HIS WORD AND
HEAD HIS CALLING,
KNOW HIS LOVE AND
GROW IN GRACE.'*

The Gospel

MT 4:12-23

Over the Sundays of ordinary time this year, we'll read consecutive passages from the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew has many quotes and allusions from the Old Testament, because he wrote for Jewish converts to Christianity, who would understand and appreciate them. Notice the extended quote from Isaiah in today's gospel. Matthew quotes Isaiah to make clear that Jesus began his ministry in a busy place, the crossroads of Jews and Gentiles' This Sunday's first reading includes the verses quoted, loosely, in today's gospel.

First Reading,

Isaiah 8:23-9:3

At the time Isaiah prophesied, Pagan Assyria was the dominant power in the region, and its boot stood heavily on the neck of the northern kingdom of a divided Israel. The degrading of Zebulun and Naphtali in verse 8:23 refers to Assyria's annexing of those provinces of Israel, circa 733 B.C.E.

Isaiah changes his mood radically in the next verse. He speaks as if a great reversal of fortune has already occurred: light dispelling darkness, great rejoicing, and liberation from the slave-driver. The "day of Midian" refers to a historic battle when the Lord empowered a few Israelite soldiers to conquer a huge enemy army (see Judges, chapter 7). Just a few verses beyond today's passage, Isaiah says why he's so confident: a new king assumes power in the Southern Kingdom, Judah (David's throne, verse 9:6), who is to re-unite Israel and Judah.

Your Proclamation: Of course the lector will want to proclaim this passage with the same tone of voice Isaiah used in delivering it, trying to inspire confidence in a dejected people. The lector has the advantage of knowing the gospel, and of having read today's gospel passage in particular. So you know that the last new king, bringer of light, rejoicing and liberation, has begun by revisiting the once devastated lands and gathering his first followers

3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Word of God Sunday

Readings

<https://www.catholicbishops.ie/readings/?feature=sunday>

*The link to the readings is a temporary one, it will bring you to the correct readings **only** for the week leading up to the Sunday in question. (its a copyright thing)*

Notes: https://lectorprep.org/ordtime_03_yrA.html

Second Reading,

1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17

Among the Christians at Corinth were several factions, each claiming allegiance to its first Christian teacher, or to a particular apostle. Paul wants them to rise above these immature rivalries. Corinth was a wild place and that Saint Paul needed to wield his authority there quite severely. Throughout this letter, he's very concerned with preserving the unity of the Christians there.

Your Proclamation: Express in your voice Paul's exasperation with the factiousness of the Corinthians. Sound sarcastic when you repeat Paul's rendition of the Corinthians' statements of misplaced loyalty ("I belong to ..."). Use your voice to express Paul's indignation when he asks "Is Christ divided? Was it Paul who was crucified for you? In whose name were you baptized, after all?"

I suggest we have Paul address his "brothers and sisters," not just his brothers. It's already written into other translations of the scriptures, but not our lectionary (yet!)

Next Readers Session: February 22nd 11 am

There will be a special lecture on Matthew on the evening of Thursday 30th January, 7.30pm I would recommend this to all Readers as worth attending.