

The Living Word

Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

24 August 2025

First Reading Is 66:18-21

They will gather all of your people from all nations.

The Lord says this: I am coming to gather the nations of every language. They shall come to witness my glory. I will give them a sign and send some of their survivors to the nations: to Tarshish, Put, Lud, Moshech, Rosh, Tubal, and Javan, to the distant islands that have never heard of me or seen my glory. They will proclaim my glory to the nations. As an offering to the Lord they will bring all your brothers, on horses, in chariots, in litters, on mules, on dromedaries, from all the nations to my holy mountain in Jerusalem, says the Lord, like Israelites bringing oblations in clean vessels to the Temple of the Lord. And of some of them I will make priests and Levites, says the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 116. R. Mk 16:15

*(R.) Go out to all the world
and tell the Good News.*

or

(R.) Alleluia!

1. O praise the Lord, all you nations,
acclaim him all you peoples! *(R.)*
2. Strong is his love for us;
he is faithful for ever. *(R.)*

Second Reading Heb 12:5-7, 11-13

The Lord disciplines those he loves.

Have you forgotten that encouraging text in which you are addressed as sons? My son, when the Lord corrects you, do not treat it lightly; but do not get discouraged when he reprimands you. For the Lord trains the ones that he loves and he punishes all those that he acknowledges as his sons. Suffering is part of your training; God is treating you as his sons. Has there ever been any son whose father did not train him? Of course, any punishment is most painful at the time, and far from pleasant; but later, in those on whom it has been used, it bears fruit in peace and goodness. So hold up your limp arms and steady your trembling knees and smooth out the path you tread; then the injured limb will not be wrenched, it will grow strong again.

Gospel Acclamation Jn 14:6

Alleluia, alleluia!

*I am the way, the truth, and the life,
says the Lord;*

*no one comes to the Father, except
through me.*

Alleluia!



Gospel Lk 13:22-30

From East and West they will come to take their place in the kingdom of God.

Through towns and villages Jesus went teaching, making his way to Jerusalem. Someone said to him, 'Sir, will there be only a few saved?' He said to them, 'Try your best to enter by the narrow door, because, I tell you, many will try to enter and will not succeed.

'Once the master of the house has got up and locked the door, you may find yourself knocking on the door, saying, "Lord, open to us" but he will answer, "I do not know where you come from." Then you will find yourself saying, "We once ate and drank in your company; you taught in our streets" but he will reply, "I do not know where you come from. Away from me, all you wicked men!"

'Then there will be weeping and grinding of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves turned outside. And men from east and west, from north and south, will come to take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God.

'Yes, there are those now last who will be first, and those now first who will be last.'

Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

'[People] from east and west, north and south . . . will feast in the Kingdom of God.' Amongst those people, will there be Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus, atheists?

The surprising answer of Catholic Christianity is: 'Yes, but always through the working of the Holy Spirit of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who can prompt the heart of *any person any where at any time* with divine grace so that that person strives to lead a life of compassion and justice and not harming innocent creatures.' Obviously, this work of the Holy Spirit could encompass millions if not billions of people who have never heard the Gospel.

If the slogan: 'No salvation outside the Church' is taken to mean no-one can be saved unless he/she is a baptised member of the Catholic Church then it is a heresy explicitly condemned by Popes.

Nevertheless, we must pray and work for the conversion of all people so that they might have the advantage of all the aids of Word and Sacrament which we draw on as direction and strength on our journey towards the destiny which God desires for each one of us.

We could pause for a moment to acknowledge the boundless mercy of God, but also praying that all peoples might share our privilege of participating in that Holy Communion which is the foretaste of the banquet prophesied by Jesus in today's Gospel.

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