

3rd Sunday of the Year B

*Make me walk in your truth, and teach me:
for you are God my saviour. (Ps 24:5)*



First Reading

Jonah 3:1-5.10

The word of the Lord was addressed a second time to Jonah: "Up!" he said, "Go to Nineveh, the great city, and preach to them as I told you to." Jonah set out and went to Nineveh in obedience to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was a city great beyond compare: it took three days to cross it. Jonah went on into the city, making a day's journey. He preached in these words, "Only forty days more and Nineveh is going to be destroyed." And the people of Nineveh believed in God; they proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least. God saw their efforts to renounce their evil behaviour. And God relented: he did not inflict on them the disaster which he had threatened.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 7:29-31

Brothers and sisters, this is what I mean: our time is growing short. Those who have wives should live as though they had none, and those who mourn should live as though they had nothing to mourn for; those who are enjoying life should live as though there were nothing to laugh about; those whose life is buying things should live as though they had nothing of their own; and those who have to deal with the world should not become engrossed in it. I say this because the world as we know it is passing away.

After John had been arrested, Jesus went into Galilee. There he proclaimed the Good News from God. "The time has come" he said "and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent, and believe the Good News."

As he was walking along by the Sea of Galilee he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net in the lake – for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you into fishers of men." And at once they left their nets and followed him.

Going on a little further, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John; they too were in their boat, mending their nets. He called them at once and, leaving their father Zebedee in the boat with the men he employed, they went after him.

Meditation

We might take it for granted that good news is the essence of Christianity. Yet we often conceive of it as a collection of beliefs, a system of spiritual and moral strictures inherited from those who received them from God and transmitted them infallibly to the Church.

At the origin of Christianity, there was no celestial indoctrination with divine truths, sprung from the First Truth. It was rather by a decisive event that faith began. God's good news is his Son Jesus. He can say: "The kingdom of God is here" because he himself is here. In him and through him, God establishes his kingdom by actively saving humanity.

In this regard, the great fisherman is Jesus himself. He attracts people not with vinegar but with the proclamation of good news. That is the savour of Christian belief. The sacraments, the beatitudes, the Church, the forgiveness of sins are all good news summarized in Jesus, revelation of a Father full of tenderness. To welcome this conviction, to follow Jesus unconditionally, is faith, conversion. It is not mere intellectual assent to a collection of inherited truths.