

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time – June 27, 2010 – Good Shepherd Parish

Scripture Reading: 1 Kings 19:16b, 19-21

The LORD said to Elijah: "You shall anoint Elisha, son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah, as prophet to succeed you." Elijah set out and came upon Elisha, son of Shaphat, as he was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen; he was following the twelfth. Elijah went over to him and threw his cloak over him. Elisha left the oxen, ran after Elijah, and said, "Please, let me kiss my father and mother goodbye, and I will follow you." Elijah answered, "Go back! Have I done anything to you?" Elisha left him and, taking the yoke of oxen, slaughtered them; he used the plowing equipment for fuel to boil their flesh, and gave it to his people to eat. Then Elisha left and followed Elijah as his attendant.

Psalm: Ps 16:1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11

R. (cf. 5a) You are my inheritance, O Lord.

Keep me, O God, for in you I take refuge;
I say to the LORD, "My LORD are you.
O Lord, my allotted portion and my cup,
you it is who hold fast my lot."

I bless the LORD who counsels me;
even in the night my heart exhorts me.
I set the LORD ever before me;
with him at my right hand I shall not be disturbed.

Therefore my heart is glad and my soul rejoices,
my body, too, abides in confidence
because you will not abandon my soul to the
netherworld,
nor will you suffer your faithful one to undergo
corruption.

You will show me the path to life,
fullness of joys in your presence,
the delights at your right hand forever.

Scripture Reading: Galatians 5:1, 13-18

Brothers and sisters: For freedom Christ set us free; so stand firm and do not submit again to the yoke of slavery. For you were called for freedom, brothers and sisters. But do not use this freedom as an opportunity for the flesh; rather, serve one another through love.

For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement, namely, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. But if you go on biting and devouring one another, beware that you are not consumed by one another.

I say, then: live by the Spirit and you will certainly not gratify the desire of the flesh. For the flesh has desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; these are opposed to each other, so that you may not do what you want. But if you are guided by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Gospel: Luke 9:51-62

When the days for Jesus' being taken up were fulfilled, he resolutely determined to journey to Jerusalem, and he sent messengers ahead of him. On the way they entered a Samaritan village to prepare for his reception there, but they would not welcome him because the destination of his journey was Jerusalem. When the disciples James and John saw this they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call down fire from heaven to consume them?" Jesus turned and rebuked them, and they journeyed to another village. As they were proceeding on their journey someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus answered him, "Foxes have dens and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head." And to another he said, "Follow me." But he replied, "Lord, let me go first and bury my father." But he answered him, "Let the dead bury their dead. But you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." And another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say farewell to my family at home." To him Jesus said, "No one who sets a hand to the plow and looks to what was left behind is fit for the kingdom of God."



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PARISH MISSION 2010 – July 18-20

“Advancing the Kingdom”

Loving God, you have called us together as one family of faith to advance the Kingdom of God. We ask you, Divine Spirit, to inspire and re-energize us as we prepare for our Parish Mission.

Open our hearts and help us to put aside the routine of a few days so that we might be filled more abundantly with your spirit and embrace more fully the vision Christ intended for us. For this we pray through Christ our Lord. Amen

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INVITATION TO PRAY

Pause for a few moments of silence and enter more deeply into the presence of God.

Proclaim the Scriptures out loud.

As you listen to the scriptures be attentive to a word, a phrase, a question, an image, or a feeling that emerges. Reflect on this quietly or share it aloud.

INVITATION TO REFLECT

Jesus is on the march and will not be turned back. He is fierce in Sunday's Gospel, and sometimes the readings startle us. He "rebukes" the disciples. A man along the way wants to bury his father and then follow Jesus, but Jesus shouts "let the dead bury the dead." He is moving fast, and his mood is intense. Get ready for it. Do you remember the time when Jesus began his public ministry? We heard about it before Lent and Easter. He came back from the desert filled with the Holy Spirit and headed straight to his home town, Nazareth. He wanted to preach his mission, but his own townspeople rejected him. They were more than blunt about it: they tried to throw him off a cliff ([Luke 4:14ff](#)). Scholars call the first portion of Luke's Gospel the "Galilean Ministry," (Luke 3:1-9:50) which has been the subject of our scripture readings until this Sunday (except for the insertion of Lent and Easter). Now a new section of Luke begins, called the "Journey to Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51-19:28).

It too begins with the rejection of Jesus. He leaves his home town but now it is the people in Samaritan towns who turn him away. He had sent messengers ahead to "warm up the audience," so to speak, but the villagers would not let him in. Jews and Samaritans were hostile to each other, and surely that is part of the reason for their rejection of him. But Luke says the real reason is that they knew he was "going up to Jerusalem." Think about that phrase. The "going up" part is literal, since Jerusalem is built upon a hill or rise, and you had to climb to get up to it. But Luke wanted the metaphorical sense too. Jesus had set his face to go up to the height of the cross. The Greek word Luke uses for "go up" is the same one used in the Second Book of Kings for the prophet Elijah's ascent into heaven. "A flaming chariot and flaming horses came . . . and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind" ([2 Kings 2:11](#)). But Jesus' "going up" will not be in a fiery chariot. His ascent will finish in a plunge downwards into humiliation and death. The hill of Golgotha was high and barren, his life's ending was low and shameful.

For the next ten chapters Luke will trace Jesus' deeds skillfully as parts of this urgent trip to Jerusalem. Now we see why Jesus was so severe with people in the reading for today: he knew what going up to Jerusalem would mean. In all this there is a question you should think about. Do you want to go along with this man on his journey? What if you hear him say, "The Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head [and neither will you]"? Or, "No one who sets a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God"? Very harsh. Wouldn't you or I and turn on our heels and run away? Yes, but think about it. Jesus is saying that Christianity (and Catholicism) are challenges, not just warm blankets. Jesus values God more than safe sleep, than family funerals, even more than courtesy to family and friends. None of these latter are evil or bad, they are good. But they receive their worth at the very core of themselves from love. Love, the primary reason for our lives and our deeds, the primary mission Jesus invites us to so urgently. Love of God above all, love of our neighbor as ourselves, no matter what.

INVITATION TO GROUP SHARING

1. What was Elisha doing when he was called? Can you think of other bible stories where God called people from their jobs? Does God call you to change your everyday life? Do you ask him to let you go back home?
2. "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," St. Paul says. Do you love your neighbor? Do you have actual love for yourself? Do you ever "bite and devour" yourself and others? If so, what are some ways the Holy Spirit can help you?
3. James and John wanted "to call down fire from heaven" to consume the Samaritans, and Jesus rebuked them for it. How do you control your own anger or your resentment? After reading this Gospel what is it that you think Jesus wants from you?

INVITATION TO ACT

Determine a specific action (individual or group) that flows from your sharing. When choosing an individual action, determine what you will do and share it with the group. When choosing a group action, determine who will take responsibility for different aspects of the action. These should be your primary considerations.

CLOSING INVITATION TO PRAY

Give thanks to God (aloud or silently) for new insights, for desires awakened, for directions clarified, for the gift of one another's openness and sensitivity. Conclude with the following:

Father, you call your children to walk in the light of Christ. Free us from darkness and keep us in the radiance of your truth. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen