

January 21, 2024

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jon 3:1-5, 10

1 Cor 7:29-31

Mk 1:14-20

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

GROW: Sometimes I feel like I need a Jonah in my life: someone who will come along and shake things up; someone who will nudge me and say, *hey, you're doing it wrong!* No one wants to be criticized, but I know I need loving guidance to help me when I am not at my best. It's easy to get caught up in the swirl of life and neglect (even if unintentionally) what's important. Jonah was given the unpleasant task of pointing out to the people of Nineveh their failings. Unlike many communities who resisted God's words, by the end of the first day of Jonah's anticipated three-day trek across the city, "the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast and all of them, great and small, put on sackcloth." For all the evil they had done, and the rebellion they had demonstrated, the people there weren't irredeemable. They simply needed Jonah to point out how they had gone astray, and the grace of open ears and hearts to receive the message. Who has the Lord placed in our lives in the role of Jonah? How has he blessed us with the ability to receive, and repent where necessary?

GO EVANGELIZE | PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

GO: We don't seem to have obvious prophets like Jonah nowadays, but that doesn't mean God has left us without guides. We have the Church, Christ's body on earth, and the ever-present help of the Holy Spirit. In today's Gospel, we hear how Jesus selected his first followers: men who would become the Twelve Apostles, anointed to spread his word and speak in his stead even after Jesus left the earth. We know that there were other followers: men, women and children who became his disciples; Jews and Gentiles who were baptized. We are part of that apostolic tradition, each one of us baptized into the common priesthood "exercised by the unfolding of baptismal grace – a life of faith, hope, and charity, a life according to the Spirit." (CCC 1547) The call to holiness can be hard to hear in the din of today's busy and secular world, but it is not impossible. We can pray for the grace to hear how God is asking each of us to live out his commands, and proclaim the Good News to the world.

PRAY: Today's psalm (Ps 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9) is a wonderful way to ask God for this favor. Make it part of your morning or evening prayer for the next week. "Your ways, O Lord, make known to me; teach me your paths."