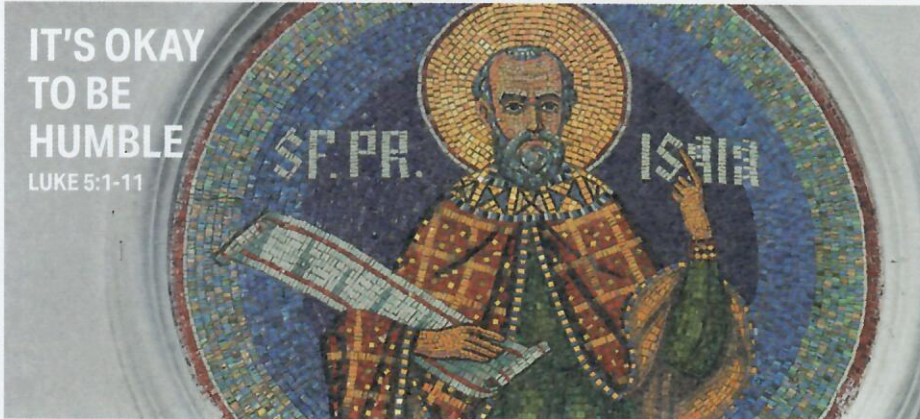


Sunday Message

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE WORD

Year C • 9 February 2025 • Psalter Week 1



One of the striking things about the great figures of the Old and New Testament is their sense of their own unworthiness. They had no illusions about how great they were. Even though God had chosen them to do great things – to be prophets, wise leaders – they were painfully aware that they were not perfect.

In the first reading, the prophet Isaiah had a profound sense of his own unworthiness in the presence of God. He sensed a vast chasm between his own uncleanness and the holiness of the Lord of heaven. "I am a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips and my eyes have looked at the King, the Lord of hosts."

St Paul regarded himself as one who had done wrong. "I am the least of the apostles," he tells the people of Corinth. "In fact, since I persecuted the Church of God, I hardly deserve the name apostle."

In the Gospel, Peter also feels intensely unworthy in the presence of Jesus. Overcome by what Jesus has done, he falls at his feet and says, "Leave me, Lord; I am a sinful man."

These prophets and apostles saw themselves as unworthy servants of God. They were all too aware of their sinfulness.

But they knew something else too: God had not called them because they were perfect. God had called them in spite of their imperfections. God had chosen them even though they were sinners. God saw the goodness in them, their potential, and that was enough.

And those prophets and apostles went on to do great things. Knowing that God was one with them, filled with God's spirit, they went out and preached God's word, they witnessed to God's plan, even undergoing martyrdom. ■

SAY

"Lord, thank you for creating me in your image and likeness. Help me to see myself and others as you see us. Amen."

LEARN

As members of the Church, we are called to make a choice for Christ and his principles and values.

The Christian knows he or she is unworthy but trusts in God's goodness and love.

Christ has called each of us by name.

DO

Very often we can be our own worst critics, obsessing over our perceived failings and weaknesses, seeing only the negative. Make a (mental or written) list of the things you like about yourself, the many gifts and talents God has given you. Thank God for God's blessings.



PRAY

To follow Jesus isn't easy. To be a Christian today means risking being ridiculed or dismissed as deluded by the forces of secularism. Pray for yourself and Christians everywhere that you will always say 'Yes' to Jesus.

REFLECT

Today's readings hold two lessons for us. First, God always sees the potential in us. Sometimes we focus on the things we don't like about ourselves, our faults, our failings. We can see ourselves as weak links, even as failures. In our celebrity obsessed culture, young people especially can look at themselves and think they don't measure up.

Sometimes, too, as individuals or as a society, we can see others as weak links. We look down on or judge individuals or groups of people. We see only their faults, their downsides, only what we think is wrong with them or inferior about them. Isn't that what racism is about? Why Hitler targeted

Jews? Why as a society we could so easily confine people to Magdalene Laundries and industrial schools? Why in school, college, the workplace or neighbourhood, we pick on the person who is different?

But in the eyes of God, no one is inferior. Since God has created each of us in God's own likeness, we can't be weak links – no matter who we are, or how we look, or how smart we are. And we are called to see ourselves the way God sees us and to see others the way God sees them.

The second lesson is to acknowledge, like Isaiah, Paul and Peter, that we are not perfect. We are always a work in progress.

But the wonderful thing is, unworthy as we are, God loves us anyway. Weak though we are, God has chosen us to be his followers. Sinful though we may be, he has called us to be his witnesses, summoned us to be saints.

We acknowledge this in the prayers of the Mass, in the words we say before receiving holy communion: "Lord, I am not worthy... but only say the word and my soul shall be healed."

God speaks only to the good in us. We must speak only to the good in ourselves and those around us. ■

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*O come, let us worship God
and bow low before the God who made us,
for he is the Lord our God.*

COLLECT

Keep your family safe, O Lord, with unfailing care, that, relying solely on the hope of heavenly grace, they may be defended always by your protection. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING Isaiah 6:1-2a. 3-8

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

In the year that King Uzziah died,
I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up;
and the train of his robe filled the Temple.
Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings.
And one called to another and said:
'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
the whole earth is full of his glory!'
And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him
who called,
and the house was filled with smoke.
And I said:
'Woe is me! For I am lost;
for I am a man of unclean lips,
and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips;
for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!'
Then one of the seraphim flew to me,
having in his hand a burning coal
that he had taken with tongs from the altar.
And he touched my mouth and said:
'Behold, this has touched your lips;
your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for.'
And I heard the voice of the Lord saying,
'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?'
Then I said, 'Here I am! Send me.'

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 138(137):1-2a. 2b-3. 4-5. 7c-8.

R. 1c

R: In the presence of the angels I praise you, O Lord.

1. I thank you, LORD, with all my heart;
you have heard the words of my mouth.
In the presence of the angels I praise you.
I bow down towards your holy Temple. **R.**
2. I give thanks to your name
for your merciful love and your faithfulness.
For you have exalted over all
your name and your promise.
On the day I called, you answered me;
you increased the strength of my soul. **R.**
3. All earth's kings shall thank you, O LORD,
when they hear the words of your mouth.
They shall sing of the ways of the LORD,
'How great is the glory of the LORD!' **R.**
4. With your right hand you save me;
the LORD will accomplish this for me.
O LORD, your merciful love is eternal;
discard not the work of your hands. **R.**

SECOND READING 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

A reading from the First Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians.

(For shorter form read between > <)

I would remind you, > brothers and sisters,< of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you — unless you believed in vain. For > I delivered to you as of

first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the Apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.< For I am the least of the Apostles, unworthy to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace towards me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. > Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.<

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL Matthew 4:19

R: Alleluia, alleluia.

Follow me, says the Lord,
and I will make you fishers of men.

R: Alleluia.

GOSPEL Luke 5:1-11

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

At that time: The crowd was pressing in on Jesus to hear the word of God. He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat. And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.' And Simon answered, 'Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets.' And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. They signalled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.' For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, 'Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.' And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

O Lord our God,
who once established these created things
to sustain us in our frailty,
grant, we pray,
that they may become for us now
the Sacrament of eternal life.
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*Let them thank the Lord for his mercy,
his wonders for the children of men,
for he satisfies the thirsty soul,
and the hungry he fills with good things.*

Or

*Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be consoled.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they shall have their fill.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

O God, who have willed that we be partakers
in the one Bread and the one Chalice,
grant us, we pray, so to live
that, made one in Christ,
we may joyfully bear fruit
for the salvation of the world.
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**