

Our Faith on Sunday

LITURGY

3rd Sunday in OT (C)

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

Cf. Ps 95:1,6

**O sing a new song to the Lord;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.
In his presence are majesty and
splendour,
strength and honour in his holy place.**

FIRST READING:

Nehemiah 8:2-6. 8-10

*Ezra read from the law of God and the
people understood what was read.*

PSALM:

Ps. 18:8-10,15.R.Jn 6:63

**R) Your words are spirit, Lord,
and they are life.**

The law of the Lord is perfect,
it revives the soul.

The rule of the Lord is to be trusted,
it gives wisdom to the simple. (R)

The precepts of the Lord are right,
they gladden the heart.

The command of the Lord is clear,
it gives light to the eyes. (R)

The fear of the Lord is holy,
abiding for ever.

The decrees of the Lord are truth
and all of them just. (R)

May the spoken words of my mouth,
the thoughts of my heart,
win favour in your sight, O Lord,
my rescuer, my rock! (R)

SECOND READING:

I Corinthians 12:12-30

*You together are Christ's body; but each of
you is a different part of it.*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, alleluia!

Lk 4:18

**The Lord has sent me to bring the good
news to the poor,
to proclaim liberty to captives.
Alleluia!**

GOSPEL:

Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21

This text is being fulfilled today.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON:

Cf. Ps 33:6

**Look toward the Lord and be radiant;
let your faces not be abashed.**



GOSPEL REFLECTION



It has its roots in history, the signs promised there were fulfilled in Jesus. As Jesus himself says of the text of Isaiah he has just read aloud in the synagogue, "This text (of Isaiah) is being fulfilled today even as you listen."

POPE FRANCIS' ENCYCLICAL
FRATELLI TUTTI
BROTHERS AND SISTERS ALL



A STRANGER ON THE ROAD

St. Luke was not a disciple of Jesus while Jesus lived on earth; he is a 'second generation' disciple. Therefore he is anxious to set before 'Theophilus' a factual and reliable account of Jesus' mission; an account is based on the reports of those who were "eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word." The prophet Isaiah speaks more than once of the signs by which the Messiah will be recognized; recognized as doing the works of God. Psalm 146 declares, "Yaweh restores the sight of the blind, Yaweh straightens the bent, Yaweh protects the stranger, he keeps the orphan and widow." The people in the synagogue in Nazara were the inheritors of the prophets; people who had been prepared by their history to recognize Isaiah's words, to accept, and to believe. St. Luke is saying to later generations, "What I am writing is no fabricated tale.

61. In the oldest texts of the Bible, we find a reason why our hearts should expand to embrace the foreigner. It derives from the enduring memory of the Jewish people that they themselves had once lived as foreigners in Egypt:

"You shall not wrong or oppress a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Ex 22:21).

"You shall not oppress a stranger; you know the heart of a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Ex 23:9).

"When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the stranger as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Lev 19:33-34).

"When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not glean what is left; it shall be for the sojourner, the orphan, and the widow. Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt" (Deut 24:21-22).



Becoming a contemplative



Reaching contemplation does not happen overnight. First of all, our heart must be set on fire with the torch of eternal love. Tasting the sweetness and feeling the warmth of contemplation we can almost die from the excess of love we feel within ourselves, for we are held tightly in the embrace of eternal love.

However, we are still able to sin, for only in heaven will we be confirmed in sinlessness. Certainly, we can be tempted and feel the pull of sin. Nevertheless, I think that those who are on the way to perfection and continue to make an effort to overcome sinful desires and actions can see heaven as it were with their inward eye.

If we take a hold of this closeness to heaven,

we can live by its sweetness and glory in jubilant song. Only those who reach this state can know its sweetness and die in safety.

To attain stability of mind and heart, prayer is a great help. Christ gave us a true example of prayer when we read in the Gospels that he went up the mountain to pray and spent the whole night in prayer. We are to ask, seek, knock, so that we will receive likewise (cf Lk. 18: 1).

Prayer kindles the fire of love within us. The prophet says: 'Are not my words as a burning fire, and as a hammer for breaking stones? (Jer. 23: 29) And the psalmist adds: 'Your promise is refined in the fire' (Ps. 119: 140).

