

Sunday, January 31, 2010
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany / Lectionary 4
Holy Communion

Worship Assistants

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 1:4–10

A reading from _____.

Today's reading relates Jeremiah's call and commissioning as a prophet in the years before the Babylonian exile of 587 B.C. His task was to preach God's word in the midst of the difficult political realities of the time. He was to make God known, not just among the Israelites, but also among the nations.

⁴Now the word of the LORD came to me saying,

⁵"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
and before you were born I consecrated you;
I appointed you a prophet to the nations."

⁶Then I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy." ⁷But the LORD said to me,

"Do not say, 'I am only a boy';
for you shall go to all to whom I send you,
and you shall speak whatever I command you.

⁸Do not be afraid of them,
for I am with you to deliver you,

says the LORD."

⁹Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the LORD said to me,
"Now I have put my words in your mouth.

¹⁰See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms,
to pluck up and to pull down,
to destroy and to overthrow,
to build and to plant."

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 71:1–6

Refrain: From my mother's womb you have been my strength. (Ps. 71:6)

¹In you, O LORD, have I ¹taken refuge;
let me never be ¹put to shame.

²**In your righteousness, deliver me and ¹set me free;
incline your ear to ¹me and save me.**

³Be my strong rock, a castle to ¹ keep me safe;
you are my crag ¹ and my stronghold.

**⁴Deliver me, my God, from the hand ¹ of the wicked,
from the clutches of the evildoer and ¹ the oppressor. R**

⁵For you are my hope, ¹ O Lord GOD,
my confidence since ¹ I was young.

**⁶I have been sustained by you ever since I was born; from my mother's womb you have ¹
been my strength;
my praise shall be al- ¹ ways of you. R**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 13:1–13

A reading from _____.

Some at Corinth prided themselves on their spiritual gifts. Paul reminds them that God gives us many gifts through the Holy Spirit, but the most important of these is love, the kind of love that allows us to live and work in cooperation with one another, the kind of love that God first showed us in Christ.

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ²And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

⁴Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant ⁵or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. ⁷It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. ⁹For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; ¹⁰but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. ¹¹When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. ¹²For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. ¹³And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Luke 4:21–30

The holy gospel according to _____.

Glory to you, O Lord.

People in Jesus' hometown are initially pleased when he speaks of the fulfillment of scriptures (specifically, of God's promise to liberate the oppressed). Their pleasure, however, turns to rage when he reminds them that prophets often bring God's blessings to those who are regarded as outsiders.

²¹Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." ²²All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" ²³He said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Doctor, cure yourself!' And you will say, 'Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.'" ²⁴And he said, "Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's hometown. ²⁵But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; ²⁶yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. ²⁷There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian." ²⁸When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. ²⁹They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. ³⁰But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Filled with the power of the Holy Spirit through baptism, let us come before the throne of God to offer prayers for the needs of the church and world.

Form the leaders of your church, O God, and send them forth without fear to speak your words of judgment and hope, so that all people may acknowledge their sin, repent, and return to life in you. God of light,
show us your glory and hear us.

Inspire artists, writers, and musicians with your Spirit, so that the lives of all people are enriched by their creative work. God of light,
show us your glory and hear us.

Change the hearts of those who hate, O God, so that conflicts, wars, and acts of terrorism may cease and nations may live in peace and security. God of light,
show us your glory and hear us.

Incline your ear to hear the cries of the powerless: victims of abuse, those who face sudden

death, and the sick (*especially*). Rescue them from despair and be for them a strong fortress of hope and trust. God of light,
show us your glory and hear us.

Fill our congregation with your love, O God, so that our witness in this community may be humble, full of truth, and open to those different from us. God of light,
show us your glory and hear us.

We give you thanks for your faithful prophets, servants, and teachers (*especially Thomas Aquinas*) whose faith remained strong even when their vision of you was dim and clouded. May their example move us to trust your promises until we, together with them, see you face to face. God of light,
show us your glory and hear us.

God of faithfulness, through the revelation of your Son we stand before you without fear and lift up to you all in need. In Jesus' name hear and answer our prayers according to your steadfast love.
Amen.

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