

HOMILY OF THE 2nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

The readings of this Sunday's liturgy remind us that God counts on us to bring about his plan of salvation for mankind. He chooses us, calls us, sends us, and equips us to be his witnesses in the world. Two questions naturally arise:

What is the mission that God wants me to carry out in the world in service of my brothers and sisters?

Have I tried to fulfill that mission?

The first reading, taken from the Book of the prophet Isaiah, presents to us the vocational story of a “servant of the Lord,” chosen by God “from the womb” to be a “light to the nations” and to bring God’s salvation “to the ends of the earth.” Aware that God sustains him with his strength, the “servant” makes himself available to carry out the mission entrusted to him. When God includes us in his plans, our response can only be a “yes” without reservations, knowing that he will be at our side as light, strength, and guide on our paths. Let us know how to always say “yes” to God in our lives, seeking always to do his will, being his servants and light for all those who live with us. Let us know how to say with the psalmist: “I come, Lord, to do your will.”

In the second reading, Saint Paul presents himself to the Christians of the city of Corinth as an Apostle by the will of God. Paul is aware that he is not an Apostle by his own initiative, but chosen and sent by God. He carries out his mission as Apostle by responding to God’s call, and he invites the Christians of Corinth also to know how to respond to the Lord’s call through the paths of a holy life, lived with Christ and at the service of their brothers and sisters. This is also the invitation made to us today: to be holy, faithful to the mission that the Lord has for each one of us.

In the Gospel, we are once again confronted with the concern that the author of the fourth Gospel has to tell us that faith in Christ is founded on testimonies. And he presents to us the testimony of John the Baptist about Jesus: He is “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world,” in a reference to the “paschal lamb” that the Jews sacrificed at Passover, recalling the liberation from Egypt. He also says: “He who sent

me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.” John thus bears witness that Jesus is the “Son of God,” possessor of the fullness of the Spirit, and who comes to baptize mankind in the Spirit. Jesus received from the Father the mission to offer mankind the new life of God, and he will carry it out with absolute fidelity. We, those who draw near to Jesus and decide to follow him, continue the work of Jesus: we are sent to bring God’s salvation to the world. May we always be able to pray: “I come, Lord, to do your will.”

As Eugénio de Andrade, a Portuguese poet, wrote:

It is urgent to love

It is urgent to have a boat at sea

It is urgent to destroy certain words:

hatred, solitude, and cruelty,

some laments, many swords.

It is urgent to invent joy,

to multiply kisses, the fields,

it is urgent to discover roses and rivers

and clear mornings.

Silence falls on the shoulders and the light

impure, until it hurts.

Love is urgent, it is urgent

to remain.

Love is urgent. Let us know how to love, and thus we will do the will of God in our lives and announce to the world the new dawns illuminated by the light of Jesus Christ.

AMEN.