

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

He went to Capernaum, that the prophecy of Isaiah be fulfilled.

Hearing that John had been arrested Jesus went back to Galilee, and leaving Nazareth he went and settled in Capernaum, a lakeside town on the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali. In this way the prophecy of Isaiah was to be fulfilled: Land of Zebulun! Land of Naphtali! / Way of the sea on the far side of Jordan, / Galilee of the nations! / The people that lived in darkness / has seen a great light; / on those who dwell in the land and shadow of death / a light has dawned. From that moment Jesus began his preaching with the message, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.'

As he was walking by the Sea of Galilee he saw two brothers, Simon, who was called Peter, and his brother Andrew; they were making a cast in the lake with their net, for they were fishermen. And he said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.' And they left their nets at once and followed him.

Going on from there he saw another pair of brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John; they were in their boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. At once, leaving the boat and their father, they followed him.

He went round the whole of Galilee teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom and curing all kinds of diseases and sickness among the people.

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

Shorter form: 4: 12-17

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Breaking Open the Word



THE SAVING WORD

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME / A

22 JANUARY 2023

CHRIST'S LIGHT

Many of us have had the experience of searching desperately for a torch or candle in the midst of a blackout. It can be a confusing and discouraging time till we find some source of light. Isaiah knew that the people of Galilee were in need of some encouragement and light in those dark days after the Assyrians had conquered their cities and led them into exile. He looks forward in hope to the day when God will lead them home and remove their burden.

For Matthew Jesus' ministry could be best understood and viewed through the filter of Isaiah's prophecy. A light dawns as Jesus begins his ministry, a ministry of teaching, healing and encouragement. The burden the people carry is now being gently lifted away by Jesus' compassion and care. It is, however, a ministry that is not to be Jesus' alone. From the beginning, others such as Peter and Andrew, James and John, are called to share generously in bringing others into the light of the kingdom.

When members of Chloe's household reported to Paul that the Corinthian community was divided he knew that they had unwittingly returned to fumbling around lost in the dark. How was he to bring them back? First of all, he reminds them that Paul, Apollos and Cephas were to be seen as nothing more other than the bearers and preachers of Christ's light. He forcefully reminds them that their unity is to be found in Jesus who gave the most eloquent sermon of all when he offered his life on the cross.

Christopher Monaghan CP

FIRST READING

Isa 8:23–9:3

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

In the Galilean country, the people have seen a great light.

In days past the Lord humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in days to come he will confer glory on the Way of the Sea on the far side of Jordan, province of the nations.

The people that walked in darkness
has seen a great light;
on those who live in a land of deep shadow
a light has shone.

You have made their gladness greater,
you have made their joy increase;
as men rejoice at harvest time,
as men are happy when they are dividing
the spoils.

For the yoke that was weighing on him,
the bar across his shoulders,
the rod of his oppressor,
these you break as on the day of Midian.

■ The word of the Lord.

RESP PSALM

Ps 26:1, 4, 13–14. R.v.1

R. The Lord is my light and my salvation.

1. The Lord is my light and my salvation; /
whom shall I fear? / The Lord is the
stronghold of my life; / before whom shall I
shrink? **R.**

2. There is one thing I ask of the Lord, /
for this I long, / to live in the house of the
Lord, / all the days of my life, / to savour
the sweetness of the Lord, / to behold his
temple. **R.**

3. I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness /
in the land of the living. / Hope in him, hold
firm and take heart. / Hope in the Lord! **R.**



SECOND READING

1 Cor 1:10–13, 17

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

I appeal to you, my brothers and sisters, make up the differences between you.

I appeal to you, brothers, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, to make up the differences between you, and instead of disagreeing among yourselves, to be united again in your belief and practice. From what Chloe's people have been telling me, my dear brothers, it is clear that there are serious differences among you. What I mean are all these slogans that you have, like: 'I am for Paul', 'I am for Apollos', 'I am for Cephas', 'I am for Christ'. Has Christ been parcelled out? Was it Paul that was crucified for you? Were you baptised in the name of Paul?

For Christ did not send me to baptise, but to preach the Good News, and not to preach that in the terms of philosophy in which the crucifixion of Christ cannot be expressed.

■ The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Mt 4:23

Alleluia, alleluia! / Jesus preached the Good News of the kingdom, / and healed all who were sick. / Alleluia!