

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME. Dc Ricardo J Puello Brenes.

(Isaiah 8:23—9:3. Psalm 26:1. 4. 13-14. 1 Cor 1:10-13, 17. Mt 4:12-23 or 4:12-17)

After John the Baptist was arrested, Jesus comes to Capernaum, in the land of Zebulun and Naphtali to begin his public ministry; and so that the prophecy that the prophet Isaiah announced seven centuries earlier, making a clear reference to the coming of the Messiah and his successful saving mission, would be fulfilled.

Isaiah announced that his glory would spread throughout the world, to overcome the oppressive darkness with his shining light, so that his people, might live the happiness and freedom of being in his presence, and enjoying the promised inheritance.

The prophet compares the day of the Messiah's triumph to the day of Midian, when God gave victory to Gideon and his three hundred men, using only torches, empty clay vessels, and trumpets, over the multitude of the Midianites and their allies. Jesus, the true light that shines by its own power, comes into the world reducing itself to the human condition, to overcome sin and death forever.

Jesus begins his ministry by announcing, ***"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"***; and to leave a tangible legacy and faithful witnesses who would continue his mission until all humanity received his gift, he began to call those he wanted to make his disciples, saying, ***"Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."*** and they left everything and followed him.

This call of Christ continues in every baptized person. That is why it is good to ask yourself: "Am I casting my nets into the sea of this turbulent and polluted world, or am I ignoring Jesus' call to his mission?"

In his letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul exhorts us all to live "***in harmony and without division.***" And it does so in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to give it the moral weight that gives the indisputable doctrinal authority of Jesus.

He reminds us of the reality of the unity of our Church, which is one, with Christ its head. There is not a European church, and an African church, an American church and a Latin American church; or a church of whites and another of blacks; a church that follows a political party and another that follows another party, etc. Our only head is Jesus Christ, who reigns through the hierarchy of apostolic succession.

Of course we can have different preferences in all fields of civil life, but without letting it lead us to division, since this does not come from Christ, but from the devil ("the one who divides"); and even less, to do so publicly, because it constitutes a scandal that wounds his Mystical Body, the Church.

What our Lord Jesus Christ wants from the beginning is a Church perfectly united "***in the same mind and in the same heart***", in intimacy for him and with him; a Church that lives and moves according to his will, expressed in the directives that he taught us in his doctrine, and that remains faithful to holy Tradition.

The Kingdom of God has already come to us by the grace of the Holy Spirit; so, to announce it we must accept living it. That is the most convincing proof that it is at hand.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, let us be faithful fishers of men who, accompanying our Lord, bring healing, union, peace and hope to every corner of the earth.

May God bless you.

