

11TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FIRST READING

Exodus 19:2-6aa

In those days: The people of Israel came into the wilderness of Sinai, and they encamped in the wilderness. There Israel encamped before the mountain, while Moses went up to God. The Lord called to him out of the mountain, saying, ‘Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: “You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” ’

PSALM

Psalm 100(99):1-2. 3. 5. R 3c

R We are his people, the sheep of his flock.

Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness. Come before him, singing for joy. R

Know that he, the Lord, is God. He made us; we belong to him. We are his people, the sheep of his flock. R

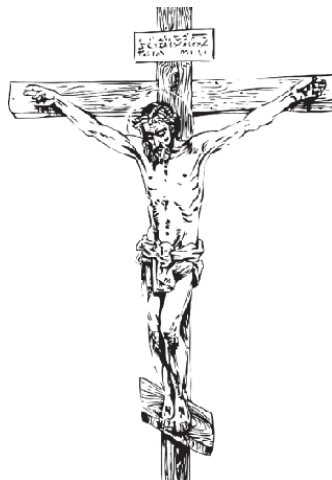
Indeed, how good is the Lord, eternal his merciful love. He is faithful from age to age. R

R We are his people, the sheep of his flock.

SECOND READING

Romans 5:6-11

Brothers and Sisters: While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person — though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die — but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.



GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia...

The kingdom of God is at hand;
repent and believe in the gospel.

Alleluia...

GOSPEL

Matthew 9:36-10:8

At that time: When Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest."

And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction. The names of the twelve Apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles

and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And proclaim as you go, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay.'

REFLECTION

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus looks upon the crowds and is moved with compassion, "because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd." Before He sends out the Twelve, He first sees.

Before there is mission, there is compassion. Before there is action, there is love. The Church Fathers often reflected on this image of Christ the Good Shepherd. St John Chrysostom notes that Jesus does not condemn the crowds for their weakness or confusion but pities them. He sees not a problem to be solved but people to be loved. His heart is stirred by their need, and from that compassion comes the call to prayer: "Ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest."

It is striking that the disciples are first told to pray for workers and then discover that they themselves are the answer to

that prayer. Having prayed for labourers, they are sent out as labourers. God calls ordinary people, with ordinary weaknesses, and entrusts them with His work.

St Augustine reminds us that the Church is not a gathering of the perfect but a hospital for sinners. Christ sends His disciples not because they have mastered every virtue but because they have learned to trust Him.

Most of us will never travel the roads of Galilee, but every Christian shares in this calling. We are sent into our homes, workplaces, schools, and communities to bear witness to Christ's compassion. Often this is found in small acts of service, encouragement, patience, and love. The harvest remains plentiful. The world still longs for meaning, hope, and healing. Christ continues to look upon humanity with the same compassion He showed in Galilee, and He continues to call His Church to join Him in that work.

As we hear this Gospel, perhaps we might ask not only for labourers for the harvest, but for the grace to recognise where Christ is already sending us.