

A reading from the first book of Kings.

Pause - and look up at the assembly

The Lord spoke to the prophet Elijah and said,

“You shall anoint Elisha, son of Shaphat,
as prophet in your place.”

So Elijah set out from there, and found Elisha, who was ploughing.

There were twelve yoke of oxen ahead of him,
and he was with the twelfth.

Elijah passed by Elisha and threw his mantle over him.

Elisha left the oxen, ran after Elijah, and said,

“Let me kiss my father and my mother,
and then I will follow you.”

Then Elijah said to him,

“Go back again; for what have I done to you?”

Elisha returned from following Elijah,

took the yoke of oxen, and slaughtered them;

using the equipment from the oxen, he boiled their flesh,

and gave it to the people, and they ate.

Then Elisha set out and followed Elijah,

and became his servant.

Elisha = EI-LEE-sha

Shaphat = SHA-FAT

Elijah = E-LIE-ja

Pause for **THREE** seconds

then look up at the people

and say SLOWLY:



The WORD of the LORD.

Thanks be to God.

A reading from the letter of Saint Paul to the Galatians.

Pause - and look up at the assembly

Brothers and sisters:
For freedom Christ has set us free.
Stand firm, therefore,
and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.
For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters;
only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence,
but through love become slaves to one another.
For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment,
“You shall love your neighbour as yourself.”
If, however, you bite and devour one another,
take care that you are not consumed by one another.
Live by the Spirit, I say,
and do not gratify the desires of the flesh.
For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit,
and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh;
for these are opposed to each other,
to prevent you from doing what you want.
But if you are led by the Spirit,
you are not subject to the law.

Pause for **THREE** seconds
then look up at the people
and say SLOWLY:



The WORD of the LORD.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL READING – C 13

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

When the days drew near for him to be taken up,
Jesus set his face to go to Jerusalem.
And he sent messengers ahead of him.
On their way they entered a village of the Samaritans
to make ready for Jesus;
but the Samaritans did not receive him,
because his face was set toward Jerusalem.
When his disciples James and John saw it, they said,
“Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven
and consume them?”
But Jesus turned and rebuked them.
Then they went on to another village.
As they were going along the road, someone said to him,
“I will follow you wherever you go.”
And Jesus said to him,
“Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests;
but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.”
To another Jesus said,
“Follow me.”
But he said,
“Lord, first let me go and bury my father.”
But Jesus said to him,
“Let the dead bury their own dead;
but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.”
Another said,
“I will follow you, Lord;
but let me first say farewell to those at my home.”
Jesus said to him,
“No one who puts a hand to the plough and looks back
is fit for the kingdom of God.”



The GOSPEL of the LORD.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

SCRIPTURE IN DEPTH

Reading I: 1 Kings 19:16b, 19-21

It is instructive to compare Elijah's call of Elisha with Jesus' call of his disciples as related in the gospel for this Sunday.

Elisha said, "Let me kiss my father and my mother, and I will follow you." When Jesus called two would-be disciples, one said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father."

Elisha's call is one that could be added to already existing responsibilities.

With Jesus' call it is different. All existing responsibilities have to be given up. They may be given back as part of the total call, but always as only part of it, enclosed within it, and subordinated to it.

The second difference is that Elijah's mantle falls upon Elisha. He can succeed him, become a prophet like his master when the latter finally departs (2 Kings 2).

But when Jesus ascends to heaven, his followers do not replace him. They remain followers, and he remains present as their living Lord.

Responsorial Psalm: 16:1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11

The early Church seized upon this psalm as a prophecy of Christ's resurrection.

In his Pentecost sermon as presented in Acts, Peter quotes verses 9-11. Once again, the "I" of the psalms is the "I" of the living Christ.

But it also includes the members of his body, and so we may take this psalm upon our own lips and make it a prayer of praise for our inheritance for our call into the life of Christ.

Reading II: Galatians 5:1, 13-18

Freedom is the hallmark of Christian existence. But this freedom is constantly threatened.

For the Galatians it was threatened because they were succumbing to the blandishments of Paul's opponents and falling prey to some kind of syncretism that included circumcision.

For Paul, this completely undermines the gospel.

Christians are free because they do not have to acquire salvation by their own works; but because they have already been given salvation as a gift, they are free to work it out in

obedience. This is the positive truth behind what gained popularity in the sixties as “situation ethics.”

There is one obligation for Christians, and that is the law of love. “The whole law is fulfilled in one word, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”

Paul does not overlook the first and greatest commandment—the love of God; he is speaking to those who have already heard the message of justification, and who have therefore been brought into the love of God.

Paul is talking about how that love of God can only express itself historically as love of neighbor. Love of neighbor should provide the Christian with a set of antennae (J.A.T. Robinson), enabling him/her to know in each concrete situation what that love requires, without a lot of rules and regulations.

The guidance needed is provided by the “as yourself”: Do to others as you would have them do to you.

“Flesh” and “Spirit” in the last paragraph are not our so-called higher and lower natures, though they are frequently thus misunderstood, even in modern translations.

“Flesh” is our old, unredeemed humanity in its totality, including what we call our “higher nature.”

“Spirit,” as the capitalization suggests, is the Spirit of God, the eschatological possibility that transforms our whole human nature, lower as well as higher, so called.

Gospel: Luke 9:51-62

The latter part of the gospel (the call of the would-be followers) has been sufficiently treated above under the Old Testament reading. Here we will concentrate on the former part.

The suggestion of James and John that fire should be called down from heaven to punish the Samaritans who would not receive Jesus “because his face was set toward Jerusalem” recalls their nickname, “Sons of thunder” (Boanerges).

Recently attempts have been made to associate Jesus with the Zealots, the revolutionary liberationists of the day. That several of Jesus’ disciples (for example, Simon the Zealot) had Zealot sympathies cannot be doubted.

It seems probable that Jesus felt the constant temptation to seek an easy way out for his mission by adopting the Zealot line (O. Cullmann). But this was for him precisely that, a temptation, and one that he constantly resisted and that brought him, humanly speaking, to the cross.

This recent controversy is a warning against the “peril of modernizing Jesus” (H. J. Cadbury).

Every new movement of thought seeks to enlist Jesus on its side. But he remains himself, the judge of all human causes. He turns and rebukes James and John!

Reginald H. Fuller