

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Pause – and look up at the assembly

Thus says the Lord:

“For I know their works and their thoughts,
and I am coming to gather all nations and tongues;
and they shall come and shall see my glory,
and I will set a sign among them.

From them I will send survivors to the nations,
to Tarshish, Put, and Lud - which draw the bow -
to Tubal and Javan,

to the coastlands far away
that have not heard of my fame or seen my glory;
and they shall declare my glory among the nations.
They shall bring all your kindred from all the nations
as an offering to the Lord,
on horses, and in chariots,
and in litters, and on mules, and on dromedaries,
to my holy mountain Jerusalem,” says the Lord,
“just as the children of Israel bring a grain offering
in a clean vessel to the house of the Lord.

And I will also take some of them as priests and as Levites,”
says the Lord.

Tarshish = **TAR**-shish
Put = **PUT**
Lud = **LOOD** [as in hood]
Tubal = **TEW**-bul [as in few]
Javan = **JAY**-van

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 to the Hebrews.

Pause – and look up at the assembly

Brothers and sisters:

You have forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as children –

“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord,
or lose heart when you are punished by him;
for the Lord disciplines those whom he loves,
and chastises every son whom he accepts.”

Endure trials for the sake of discipline.

God is treating you as sons;

for what son is there whom a father does not discipline?

Now, discipline always seems painful

rather than pleasant at the time,

but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness

to those who have been trained by it.

Therefore lift your drooping hands

and strengthen your weak knees,

and make straight paths for your feet,

so that what is lame may not be put out of joint,

but rather be healed.

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 21

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus went through one town and village after another,
teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem.
Someone asked him,
“Lord, will only a few be saved?”
Jesus said to them,
“Strive to enter through the narrow door;
for many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able.
When once the owner of the house has got up and shut the door,
and you begin to stand outside
and to knock at the door, saying,
‘Lord, open to us,’
then in reply he will say to you,
‘I do not know where you come from.’
Then you will begin to say,
‘We ate and drank with you,
and you taught in our streets.’
But the Lord will say,
‘I do not know where you come from;
go away from me, all you evildoers!’
“There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth
when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob
and all the prophets in the kingdom of God,
and you yourselves thrown out.
Then people will come from east and west,
from north and south,
and will eat in the kingdom of God.
Indeed, some are last who will be first,
and some are first who will be last.”



The GOSPEL of the LORD.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

SCRIPTURES IN DEPTH

Reading I: Isaiah 66:18-21

The gathering together of all peoples of the world at Zion at the beginning of the messianic age is a frequent picture of the Isaianic and other Old Testament prophecies.

Christian faith sees the fulfillment of these prophecies partly in the bringing of people from all nations into the catholic Church, and partly in the future coming of the Son of man to gather all the nations of the world into his kingdom.

John Mason Neale's translation of an early Eastern Orthodox hymn expresses this typology and this faith:

Rise, Sion, rise, and looking forth
 behold thy children round thee!
From east and west, from south and north,
 thy scattered sons have found thee:
And in thy bosom Christ adore
For ever and for ever more.

Responsorial Psalm: 117:1, 2

This psalm, which calls upon all nations to praise the name of YHWH, is cited by St. Paul (Romans 15:11) in a catena of Old Testament texts to illustrate the universal scope of God's redemptive purpose in Christ.

It is, therefore, an appropriate response to the Old Testament reading, with its picture of the movement of all peoples to Zion.

Reading II: Hebrews 12:5-7, 11-13

At first sight this reading is divergent in theme from the other readings of this Sunday. Elsewhere the theme is the universality of the gospel; here it is the divine disciplining of the faithful.

Hebrews alternates between ethical exhortation and doctrinal-exegetical exposition. The exposition, which reaches its culmination in the long section on the high-priestly office of Christ (Hb 7:1-10:18), is intended to undergird the exhortation. This exhortation reflects the situation of the author's readers.

They have been Christian for a long time and are yielding to discouragement and frustration. The "discipline" to which they are being subjected is probably not acute persecution but the petty pinpricks of their non-Christian neighbors.

Gospel: Luke 13:22-30

This passage, which culminates in the great proclamation that many will come from east and west and take their place in the kingdom of God, begins somewhat unpromisingly with the assertion (in response to the question whether many or only a few will be saved) that one can only enter that kingdom by a narrow door.

The universalism of the Christian Gospel is no easygoing thing. It is intended for all but is offered through Christ alone. The universality goes hand in hand with the “scandal of particularity.”

The messianic banquet is for those who are prepared to “eat the flesh” of the Messiah and to “drink his blood.”

Reginald H. Fuller