

## Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time – July 2, 2017 – Good Shepherd Parish

### Scripture Reading: 2 Kings 4:8-11, 14-16a

One day Elisha came to Shunem, where there was a woman of influence, who urged him to dine with her. Afterward, whenever he passed by, he used to stop there to dine. So she said to her husband, "I know that Elisha is a holy man of God. Since he visits us often, let us arrange a little room on the roof and furnish it for him with a bed, table, chair, and lamp, so that when he comes to us he can stay there." Sometime later Elisha arrived and stayed in the room overnight.

Later Elisha asked, "Can something be done for her?" His servant Gehazi answered, "Yes! She has no son, and her husband is getting on in years." Elisha said, "Call her." When the woman had been called and stood at the door, Elisha promised, "This time next year you will be fondling a baby son."

### Responsorial Psalm: 89:2-3, 16-17, 18-19

**R. (2a) For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.**

The promises of the LORD I will sing forever,  
through all generations my mouth shall proclaim your  
faithfulness.

For you have said, "My kindness is established  
forever;"

in heaven you have confirmed your faithfulness.

**R. For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.**

Blessed the people who know the joyful shout;  
in the light of your countenance, O LORD, they walk.  
At your name they rejoice all the day,  
and through your justice they are exalted.

**R For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.**

You are the splendor of their strength,  
and by your favor our horn is exalted.

For to the LORD belongs our shield,  
and the Holy One of Israel, our king.

**R. For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.**

### Scripture Reading: Rom 6:3-4,8-11

Brothers and sisters: Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life.

If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him. As to his death, he died to sin once and for all; as to his life, he lives for God.

Consequently, you too must think of yourselves as dead to sin and living for God in Christ Jesus.

### Gospel: Mt 10:37-42

Jesus said to his apostles: "Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

"Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me. Whoever receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and whoever receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward. And whoever gives only a cup of cold water to one of these little ones to drink because the little one is a disciple—amen, I say to you, he will surely not lose his reward."



Almighty God, bless our nation and make it true  
to the ideas of freedom and justice  
and brotherhood for all who make it great.

Guard us from war, from fire and wind,  
from compromise, fear, confusion.

Be close to our president and our statesmen;  
give them vision and courage,  
as they ponder decisions affecting peace  
and the future of the world.

Make me more deeply aware of my heritage;  
realizing not only my rights but also my duties  
and responsibilities as a citizen.

Make this great land and all its people  
know clearly Your will, that they may fulfill  
the destiny ordained for us  
in the salvation of the nations,  
and the restoring of all things in Christ. Amen

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### **INVITATION TO PRAY**

*Pause for a few moments of silence and enter more deeply into the presence of God.*

### **Proclaim the Scriptures out loud.**

As you listen to the scriptures be attentive to a word, a phrase, a question, an image, or a feeling that emerges. Reflect on this quietly or share it aloud.

### **INVITATION TO REFLECT**

Jesus is on the march and will not be turned back. He is fierce in Sunday's Gospel, and sometimes the readings startle us. He "rebukes" the disciples. He shouts "let the dead bury the dead" when a man along the way wants to bury his father first. He is moving fast, and his mood is intense. We have heard about Jesus' public ministry, in the liturgical time before Lent/Easter. He had come back from the desert filled with the Holy Spirit, and he headed straight to Nazareth, his home town, ready to preach his mission. His own townspeople were more than blunt about rejecting him: they tried to throw him off a cliff (Luke 4:14ff). This was the first portion of Luke's Gospel, which scholars call the "Galilean Ministry" (Luke 3:1-9:50), the subject of our Sunday scripture readings (except for the insertion of Lent and Easter). Now a new section of Luke begins, called the "Journey to Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51-19:28). Get ready for it. Now it is the people in Samaritan towns who turn him away as he passes by. He had sent messengers ahead to "warm up the audience," so to speak, but Jews and Samaritans were hostile to each other so villagers would not let him in. Luke says the real reason is that they knew he was "going up to Jerusalem."

### **Jesus' "going up" will not be in a fiery chariot. His "ascent" will be a plunge downwards into humiliation and death.**

Think about that phrase, "going up to Jerusalem." The "going up" part is literal, since Jerusalem is built on a hill or rise. But Luke wanted the metaphorical sense, too. Jesus had "set his face" to go up to the height of the cross. The Greek word Luke uses for "go up" is the same one used in the Second Book of Kings for the prophet Elijah's ascent into heaven. "A flaming chariot and flaming horses came ... and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind" (2 Kings 2:11). Jesus' "going up" will not be in a fiery chariot. His "ascent" will be a plunge downwards into humiliation and death. The hill of Golgotha was high and barren, his ending was low and shameful. For the next ten chapters, Luke will skillfully trace this ascent as parts of Jesus' urgent trip to Jerusalem. We see why he was so severe with people now: he knew what going up to Jerusalem would mean. Do you want to go along with this man on his journey? What if you hear him say, "The Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head [and neither will you]"? Or, "No one who sets a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God"? Wouldn't you or I turn on our heels and run away? Maybe. But look at it. Jesus is saying that Christianity and Catholicism are to be challenges, not warm blankets. Jesus opens to God, more than to safe sleep, than to family funerals, even more than courtesy to family and friends. None of these latter are evil or bad. They are good. But they receive their worth at their very core from love, which is the primary reason for our lives and deeds, and is the primary mission Jesus invites us to so urgently. Love of God above all, love of our neighbor as ourselves.

### **INVITATION TO GROUP SHARING**

1. If prophets speak to transform society in some way, is there some corner of your world you can change for the better? If you feel inadequate about transforming society as a whole, is there anything in the readings that tells you it is all right to start small?
2. Think of ways God might use you if your attitude is Christ's and you put yourself at the disposal of God's saving work in the world?
3. Who is blessed, the one who gives the help or the one who receives it? Are you always the giver or do you need to receive at times?

### **INVITATION TO ACT**

Determine a specific action (individual or group) that flows from your sharing. When choosing an individual action, determine what you will do and share it with the group. When choosing a group action, determine who will take responsibility for different aspects of the action. These should be your primary considerations. The following are secondary suggestions.

### **CLOSING INVITATION TO PRAY**

Give thanks to God (aloud or silently) for new insights, for desires awakened, for directions clarified, for the gift of one another's openness and sensitivity. Conclude with the following:

Renewed and nourished by the Sacred Body and Precious Blood of your Son, we ask of your mercy, O Lord, that what we celebrate with constant devotion may be our sure pledge of redemption. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.