

World Mission Sunday 2012

LITURGY PREPARATION NOTES

20/21 October 2012

29th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year B

Introduction

Today is World Mission Sunday. We remind ourselves that Christ commissioned his disciples to make disciples of all the nations and that we have a share in that task. Jesus promised to give his life as a ransom for many. We remind ourselves today that it is only in his name that people can be saved, and we commit ourselves to making that name known and loved everywhere on earth.

Penitential Rite (Roman Missal option VI, p1531)

Lord Jesus, you have revealed yourself as the way to the Father:
Lord, have mercy.

You have poured out on your people the spirit of truth:
Christ, have mercy.

You are the Good Shepherd leading us to eternal life:
Lord, have mercy.

Today's Readings

First Reading: Isaiah 53: 10-11

Second Reading: Hebrews 4: 14-16

Gospel: Mark 10: 35-45

Application - Homily Notes

In your mind's eye, take a walk around this country and imagine that Christ had never been born or that the Gospel had never reached these islands in any shape or form. Take away the Gospel, take away Christ and see what's left of our culture, our country, art, architecture, music, but also many of our attitudes of fairness, honesty and above all the care of the victim and the marginalised. There are very strong forces at work which would get us to ignore and even deny our Christian heritage,

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but so much of our culture comes from the Gospel. It has been a huge force for good. We would be incomparably poorer without it, indeed Europe as we know it would not exist without the Gospel.

The Holy Father has spoken out about relativism – the notion that all ideas are equal, that it doesn't matter which religion you practise so long as you're sincere. It matters that your religion is true. We are so used to Christianity that we forget what a powerful force it is. In today's Gospel Jesus says that he has come to give his life as a ransom for many. At every Mass we rehearse that same idea in a slightly different form.

We say: 'Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world.' That's a huge bold claim to make. Not just 'our sins', not just 'the sins of those who believe in you', but the sins of the whole world. We claim that the death and resurrection of Christ has an effect on every single member of the human race. That's either true or it isn't. We can't play the daft post-modern game of 'well it's true for me but maybe not for you'.

Modern political correctness may make us shy of voicing the Gospel's claims so boldly, but voice them we must. We believe that the full truth – note the full truth about God and about human beings is only revealed in Jesus Christ.

The idea of going as a missionary to people who presumably already have a religion is not too fashionable today. But that's what Saint Augustine did, that's what Saint Patrick did and hundreds like them and the reason we are here today is that ultimately someone took the trouble to bring the Gospel to us. The challenge for us is to afford the same opportunity to others. To take up the Lord's command to make disciples of all the nations and bring the truth of the Gospel. Blessed Pope John Paul II said 'The Church proposes; she imposes nothing. It respects individuals and cultures, and she honours the sanctuary of conscience' (*Redemptoris Missio* 39). Faith in God is first and foremost a mystery and a gift. We can witness to the Gospel through charitable works, and that is mostly what missionaries do. 'Faith without witness bears no fruit, while charity without faith would be a sentiment constantly at the mercy of doubt. Faith and charity require each other' (Benedict XVI, *Porta Fidei*). Missionaries provide education and healthcare, run hospitals and provide aid. These good works are motivated solely by their faith in God. Faith truly changes everything and the way we look at our world. Thank God for our faith and the opportunity to spread it.

Prayers of the Faithful

Celebrant

We pray to God our Father who has called us all to be missionaries.

Intercessions

1. We pray for the Pope, the bishops and all who lead and guide your Church; that they may be led into the fullness of truth which Jesus came to reveal to us.
2. We pray that all Christian people will show forth the love of Christ, a true sign of God's presence.
3. We pray for the Church in countries which are racked by division and violence, that it may truly be an instrument of healing and reconciling love.
4. We pray for all those who do not know Christ, that they may be guided towards the light and joy that only he can give.
5. We pray for those who have lost their faith. That the Lord may reveal himself to them in a new way, so that they too may enjoy the life God gives.
6. We pray for all missionaries, that God may sustain them when they are weary, lighten their hearts when they are sad and help them to know who it is that they are serving.

We join our prayers with Mary, who through her Yes brought Christ into the world. We pause to pray for our own private needs.

Celebrant

God our Father from whom all truth and freedom comes, hear our prayers on behalf of all your people and grant that what we ask in trust we may receive in joy from your hand. Through Christ our Lord. Amen

Final Blessing

May the mission of Jesus be our constant joy

May the Lord help us to share our faith with hope

May he grant us the grace to proclaim his Good News with courage