

**First Reading:** Jeremiah 1:4-5,17-19.  
**Response:** “*My lips will tell of your help*” (Ps.70:15)  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 70:1-6,15,17,  
**Second Reading:** I Corinthians 12:31-13:13  
**Gospel:** Luke 4:21-30

The Risen Lord is not only Jesus of Nazareth, a Jew for Jews, but Saviour of us all. He is here for everyone in every moment of our lives. We are chosen to share this experience so others may also become part of the Chosen People of God.

God had a plan for the salvation of humanity at the dawn of creation. The Messiah will fulfil it and we are part of God’s plan long before we were born. “*I have appointed you as a prophet to the nations*” (Jer.1:5).

So Jeremiah typifies not only the Messiah with a mission but each of us **with a commission** to face the challenge for truth, salvation, love and justice. We have to “**confront this land: its leaders, its priests, its country people**” (Jer. 1:18). This warrants honesty and humility from top to bottom, in the land and in the Church. Truth precedes personal interests.

Like the prophet we have to speak out the word of God in all its fullness. “*My lips will tell of your justice*” (Ps.70:15). The prophet does not compromise himself nor the Word of God.

Even when the prophet has aged, he is still faithful in serving the Lord. “*O God you have taught me from my youth and I proclaim your wonders still*” (Ps.70:17).

Paul shows that the most authentic proclamation of God’s word is with love. “*If I have the eloquence of angels but speak without love, I am simply a gong booming or a cymbal clashing*” (1 Cor.13:1). Paul is speaking of *agape* love, an attribute of God and basic to divine and human relationships.

In Corinth, love became a mixed up term, even confused with lust. Paul spells out what is true love, *agape*, the deepest truth in creation and everlasting. “**There are three things that last: faith, hope and love; and the greatest of these is love**” (1 Cor.13:13).

The Gospel shows the full revelation of the Love of God, Word made flesh, addressing the people and “*they were astonished by the gracious words that came from his lips*” (Lk.4:22).

The people however, did not accept God’s Word and wanted to destroy Christ. “**Everyone in the synagogue was enraged**” (Lk.4:28). The Gospel shows Jesus’ rejection and that he is sent not only to the Jews but like Elijah and Elisha, reached out to others.

Read today’s **Gospel** on Jesus’ prophetic mission to his people (Lk.4:21-30).

The Jews go out the synagogue to destroy him. How do we go with Christ after **Mass**?

**Teaching** on prophecy is not fore-telling but forth-telling, speaking out the Word of God.

Be prepared to proclaim the Truth even at the cost of rejection and persecution. **Witness**.

### **FOR THE CHILDREN**

Read about Jesus’ experience in his home-town of Nazareth (Lk.4:21-30). (**Scripture**)

Hear the closing words of **Mass**. What will we do to keep going with him and not forget him?

You are anointed prophet at Baptism. You are called to help and give **Teaching** to others.

Stand up for Jesus, do what is right, and do what he would do in your situation. (**Witness**)

### **FOR TEENAGEERS** (*Shared Christian Praxis*)

**Name the Present Action:** Share your thoughts of the Jesus' reception in Nazareth.

**Your Story and Vision:** **How much do you identify with being rejected for the truth?**

**Church's Story and Vision:** *Give Church's teaching and experiences of commitment.*

**Church's Vision and Yours:** Work with Church in living out your apostolic commitments for the building of the Kingdom of God, Messianic age.

### **RCIA**

Jesus is the משיח (*Mashiah*), *Messiah*, Christ, the Anointed One. "The Spirit anointed him as king, priest, and prophet, fulfilment of the messianic hope of Israel" (i). Christians today live and proclaim the salvation of our God, announcing the Good News, in spite of opposition and many persecutions. The Church marches on under the banner of the cross.

(i) **THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH # 436**. Paulinas. Pauline Publications Africa, Nairobi. 1994.

### **LIFE EXPERIENCE**

Child abuse by the clergy, making the headlines of the mass media, has scandalized the world. Like the pilots who dropped the atomic bomb, we say, "My God, what have we done?" To deal with the situation, the Church has established codes of conduct, disciplinary committees, psychological therapy facilities, and so on. For many it is too little too late; but better late than never. The Church bows its head in shame and prays for forgiveness and the healing of its victims. It seems what really brought the Church to its senses is fear of lawsuits and publicity. Hopefully, the Church will learn that its primary motives should be in terms of its prophetic call of duty to God and to His people. It should witness to a higher sense of morality rather than legalities, cover-ups and lies to save its face and finances. *Quis custodiet custodes*, who will guard the guardians of morality, who suppose to be the salt of the earth? **"If the salt loses its flavour, with what shall it be salted?"** (Matt. 5:13). **"They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water"** (Jer.2:13).

P.S. I still wonder about the feasibility of the hierarchy spending its money and energy on debatable liturgical changes and placing further burdens on the People of God.

### **LITTLE ANGELINA**

Little Angelina comes from a hugging family. They greet one another with a kiss and a hug. What she did not know was that one member, a teenage cousin, could not be touched. She had been abused by a cleric and is now paranoid, weary of any physical contact with anyone. She is undergoing psychiatric therapy and God alone knows the damage done. Angelina knows that she is jumpy but does not know why. Angelina loves going to church and is fond of her priest. I wonder what she will think when she finds out the truth about her cousin.

### **IMPORTANT WORDS:** **"Before I FORMED you, I CONSECRATED you"** (Jer. 1:5)

Two important words portraying God's action in the life of the prophet is **"form"** and **"consecrate."** The Hebrew word for 'form' is יצר, *yatsar*, meaning to fashion and to mould, as the potter moulds clay. God knew why he was forming Jeremiah. The Hebrew word for 'consecrate' is קדש, *qadash*, meaning to separate, set apart for God, rendered sacred, holy. Such is the special role of the prophet in God's plan of salvation. He is set apart for a special mission of love, obedience and service. Jeremiah made excuses reasoning his youthfulness and inexperience. God is clear about his choice and if he has chosen you to do a job he will provide all you need to do it. He doesn't promise to keep his prophet out of trouble but to see him through it. How do we compare? Do we make excuses? Do we trust in the Lord and proclaim God's uncompromising truth? Are you aware of why God made you and needs you, to be his prophet?

**Watchword:** *"I have appointed you a prophet to the nations" (Jer. 1:5)*

Hebrew: נְבִיא לְגוֹיִם נִתְּנָךְ Navi' lagoyem nethatiyka.  
Greek: Προφητην εις εθνη τεθεικα σε. Propheten eis ethne tetheika se.  
Latin: Prophetam gentibus dedi te.  
Spanish: Te di por profeta a las naciones.  
Portuguese: As nações te dei por profeta.  
French: Je t'avais destine a etre mon porte-parole aupres des nations.  
German: Und bestellte dich zum Propheten für die Völker.  
Afrikaans: En jou as profeet vir die nasies aangestel.  
Zulu: Ngakubeka umprofethi ezizweni.  
Xhosa: Ndakwalatha ukuba ube ngumshumayeli kwiintlanga.  
Sotho: Ka o kgethela ho ba moporofeta wa ditjhaba.  
Irish: