

The Third Sunday of Ordinary Time Cycle A 2023

Isaiah is writing at a time when the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, two Northern tribes, along with rest of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, had been conquered by the Assyrians and there is great suffering among the people. There was gloom, distress and darkness over the land. Their demise, their fall from grace, was a result of their refusal to follow the ways of the Lord and earn his protection. Amos had warned them of abuse and neglect of the poor but they refused to listen. A study of the history of the great empires that have gone before us, reveals that they all became morally bankrupt before they collapsed or were defeated. Greed, corruption, and our obsession with luxury goods and physical pleasure will lead to our demise as a nation, unless we change our ways. Let us not make the same mistake and lose our current prosperity because of our neglect of the poor

Saint Paul stresses the importance of unity based on the bond of the Holy Spirit we received at baptism. We are all baptized into the life of Christ. We are one church. We are not the church of Peter, or the Church of Paul or the Church of Apollo. Likewise we are not just St Bart, but part of the Church of Archdiocese of Miami and the Universal church.

In the Gospel, Jesus begins his ministry with a sense of urgency:

“The kingdom of heaven is at hand”. I am here to create a society of Peace and Justice. Repent and follow my teachings.

When God calls for action, whether through Jesus or his appointed bishops, our response should be immediate. When Jesus called Peter and Andrew and James and John, they responded immediately. They did not say “let us think about this for a while”.

Who we are, is not who we think we are, but how we act
As Christians we are called to be kind and compassionate.

The scriptures tells us that if a brother or sister is in need of food, clothes or shelter, we cannot wish them well and only pray for them, without addressing their basic physical needs. How we act is who we are! Can you call yourself a brother or sister of Christ and not care for another poor brother or sister?

There is the sin of omission: that which we fail to do. In Matthew chapter 25, Jesus told those condemned that when they failed to help the poor, the naked, the homeless and the stranger , it was he whom they rejected.

St. Bartholomew does its part locally, we feed the homeless, and give food and clothing, if necessary, to the poor every Friday and Thanksgiving. We also use to cook and feed the homeless at a shelter in Hollywood until COVID terminated the program. However, the Archdiocese have a better understanding of the needs of the Archdiocese and where those who suffer the most reside. It is better able to train priest and deacons. It gives scholarships to low income parents. St Bartholomew school receives \$15 to 20 thousand to help low income families, in addition to other state programs such as “Step Up” and “Fax”

Please support the upcoming ABCD. Many thanks the regulars for their continued generosity. Special thanks to the sixteen who gave more than \$1,000 in 2022.

I wish everyone who has a job and have never participated to contribute a minimum of \$200. Over a period of ten months, it is twenty dollars a month or 67 cents a day

For those who have never given at all, think of how generous you were with yourselves at Christmas. New car, new phone, new large screen TV, jewelery, etc. Can you also be generous to our needy brothers and sisters. Please give to the ABCD.

Mother Teresa tells us that when we get to heaven’s door, St Peter will ask “what acts charity have you done recently?” Your password will be ABCD.