



THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

SUNDAY, JANUARY 21–27

LECTIONARY 3

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:1-4

A reading from Isaiah.

¹There will be no gloom for those who were in anguish.
In the former time ¹the LORD brought into contempt
the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,
but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea,
the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

²The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

³You have multiplied exultation;
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴For the yoke of their burden
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

Word of God, word of life. or The word of the Lord.

PSALMODY: Psalm 27:1, 4-9

FIRST READING *Isaiah = eye-ZAY-uh Zebulun = ZEB-you-lun Naphtali = NAF-tuh-lye*
Midian = MID-ee-un

The sound of the reading is bold and assertive (and laced with joy in verses 2-4!). In the gospel appointed for the day, Matthew will point to Jesus as the fulfillment of this prophecy. An important part of the lector's assignment today is to help the people recognize the prophecy when they hear it quoted in the gospel.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:10-18

A reading from First Corinthians.

¹⁰Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters,
by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
that all of you be in agreement
and that there be no divisions among you
but that you be knit together in the same mind and the same purpose.

¹¹For it has been made clear to me by Chloe's people
that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters.

¹²What I mean is that each of you says,
"I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos,"
or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ."

¹³Has Christ been divided?
Was Paul crucified for you?
Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

¹⁴I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius,
¹⁵so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name.

¹⁶I did baptize also the household of Stephanas;
beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.

¹⁷For Christ did not send me to baptize
but to proclaim the gospel—
and not with eloquent wisdom,
so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power.

¹⁸For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing,
but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Word of God, word of life. or The word of the Lord.

SECOND READING *Apollos = uh-POL-us Cephas = SEE-fus Gaius = GAY-us*
Stephanas = Stef-AHN-us

All of the apostle's instruction leads to the conclusion in verse 18. Build toward it in the reading of the text. Verse 16 is parenthetical. Work at making it sound so. This will enhance the sense of "listening in on" the apostle's thinking. The sound of the reading is that of a parent or a pastor making an important appeal to maturing children or parishioners.

GOSPEL: Matthew 4:12-23

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

¹²Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested,
he withdrew to Galilee.

¹³He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea,
in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali,

¹⁴so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah
might be fulfilled:

¹⁵“Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali,
on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles—

¹⁶the people who sat in darkness
have seen a great light,
and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death
light has dawned.”

¹⁷From that time Jesus began to proclaim,
“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

¹⁸As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers,
Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother,
casting a net into the sea—for they were fishers.

¹⁹And he said to them,
“Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people.”

²⁰Immediately they left their nets and followed him.

²¹As he went from there, he saw two other brothers,
James son of Zebedee and his brother John,
in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets,
and he called them.

²²Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

²³Jesus went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues
and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom
and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

The gospel of the Lord.

GOSPEL *Capernaum = kuh-PER-nuh-um Zebulun = ZEB-you-lun Naphtali = NAF-tuh-lye*
Isaiah = eye-ZAY-uh Zebedee = ZEB-uh-dee

Map the reading out—literally. Use a Bible atlas. Verses 12-16 will be the richer for the reader’s ability to visualize the geography. Thereafter Jesus is “on the move.” Help the assembly “follow him” by carefully detailing where he goes, what he does, and what happens next.