

Reflection for the 21st Sunday of Ordinary Time

“I come to gather nations of every language; they shall come and see my glory. I will set a sign among them; from them I will send fugitives to the nations: to Tarshish, Put and Lud, Mosoch, Tubal and Javan, to the distant coastlands that have never heard of my fame, or seen my glory; and they shall proclaim my glory among the nations. Isaiah 66:19

There are many things that are unique to Christianity and the Catholic Church, such as the Immaculate Conception, the Seven Sacraments, the Holy Trinity, the incarnation of Jesus, the son of God. The concept of sharing the Good News with the whole world is not unique to Christianity for in our First Reading this Sunday, taken from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, we hear the Lord speaking of Tarshish, Put, Lud, Mosoch, Tubal, and Javan sharing His glory among the nations. Before the incarnation of the Son of God, God the Father is already focused on His glory being shared among the nations.

Isaiah the Prophet flourished in 8th Century BC Jerusalem, whom the Book of Isaiah is attributed to. This Prophet is a significant contributor to Jewish and Christian traditions. His calling to be a Prophet took place in 742 BC, which coincided with the beginnings of the westward expansion of the Assyrian Empire. The Prophet Isaiah saw the westward expansion of the Assyrian Empire as a threat to Israel and the Prophet proclaimed it to be a warning from God to the Israel, to turn back to the God of their forefathers. The holiness of the one God, Creator and Master of the world, is what dominates the message of the Prophet Isaiah.

Our First Reading this Sunday provides us with a reminder that we are called to share the Good News with all the world. This is not something that is a suggestion or meant for only some people. Of course, there are many ways we can and should share the Good News in our daily lives; this Good News can be shared through prayer, sharing Sacred Scriptures, and by words of encouragement or an act of kindness. It is important to note that there is a reason for sharing the Good News with the world and that is for the salvation of souls.

In our Gospel Reading this Sunday taken from the Gospel of Luke, we hear of Jesus passing through towns and villages on His way to Jerusalem, where He will give His life for the salvation of humanity. While He is on this journey someone in the crowd asks Him, *“Lord will only a few people be saved?”* Jesus responds by stating one should strive to enter through the narrow gate, He goes on and shares a parable about guests trying to enter the house after the master had gone to bed and the master refuses stating he does not know them. This Gospel Reading from the Gospel of Luke appears to be pointing out that it is not just good enough to share the Good News, this Good News must be such a part of us that when people look at us, they see the Good News. The Good News of Jesus Christ that we are called and commissioned to share with the whole world, is not meant to be an accessory that we put on or take off, rather this Good News is meant to become a part of who we are and how we are seen by the world. People should be able to receive the Good News from us by their first impressions of us, and the better they get to know us the more complete they see the Good News coming from us in our words, deeds and actions. So, when the time comes and we do knock on the door and ask the Master to open it, He will without hesitation open the door for us, because He knows us and the Good News that we carry in our hearts.