

Reading for the Feast of St Andrew

30th November 2024

First reading

Romans 10:9-18

Faith comes from what is preached, and what is preached comes from the word of Christ

If your lips confess that Jesus is Lord and if you believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, then you will be saved. By believing from the heart you are made righteous; by confessing with your lips you are saved. When scripture says: *those who believe in him will have no cause for shame*, it makes no distinction between Jew and Greek: all belong to the same Lord who is rich enough, however many ask his help, *for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved*.

But they will not ask his help unless they believe in him, and they will not believe in him unless they have heard of him, and they will not hear of him unless they get a preacher, and they will never have a preacher unless one is sent, but as scripture says: *The footsteps of those who bring good news are a welcome sound*. Not everyone, of course, listens to the Good News. As Isaiah says: *Lord, how many believed what we proclaimed?* So faith comes from what is preached, and what is preached comes from the word of Christ. Let me put the question: is it possible that they did not hear? Indeed they did; in the words of the psalm, *their voice has gone out through all the earth, and their message to the ends of the world*.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 18(19):2-5

Their word goes forth through all the earth.

The heavens proclaim the glory of God,
and the firmament shows forth the work of his hands.

Day unto day takes up the story
and night unto night makes known the message.

No speech, no word, no voice is heard
yet their span extends through all the earth,
their words to the utmost bounds of the world.

Gospel Acclamation

Mt4:19

Alleluia, alleluia!

Follow me, says the Lord,
and I will make you into fishers of men.

Alleluia!

Gospel

Matthew 4:18-22

'I will make you fishers of men'

As Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who was called Peter, and his brother Andrew; they were making a cast in the lake with their net, for they were fishermen. And he said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.' And they left their nets at once and followed him. Going on from there he saw another pair of brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John; they were in their boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. At once, leaving the boat and their father, they followed him.

Short reflection on the reading for today

We have heard the story of the call of Andrew along with his brother Simon Peter and the other two sets of brothers, James and John. There is a great simplicity about the passage. Jesus saw the two brothers, Simon and Andrew, making a cast with their net, going about their daily work, and he called out to them, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of people." Immediately the two brothers left their nets and followed Jesus. The evangelist has perhaps streamlined an experience in the lives of these two brothers that, in reality, may have been a lot more complex. You would expect that there must have been some resistance to the call of Jesus, because it meant leaving what they were familiar with and good at and heading out into the unknown. Catching people is a lot more challenging than catching fish. Gathering people into the net of God's kingdom proclaimed by Jesus is much more complicated than gathering fish from the Sea of Galilee into fishing nets. Yet, if there was hesitation in Andrew and Simon, they obviously overcame it; they threw in their lot with Jesus. They became great preachers of the gospel. The way the Lord works in our own lives is perhaps not all that different to the way he worked in the lives of Andrew and Simon. He often calls us out to us in the midst of our daily tasks. He calls us beyond where we are, beyond the familiar, in the service of the coming of God's kingdom. That call can come to us in small and subtle ways. We may find ourselves resisting it, but if we attend to it and allow it to resonate within us, and respond to it, we will often discover that the Lord works through us for good in ways that can surprise us.