

THE FIRST READING IS FROM THE BOOK OF ISAIAH
ABOUT CARE FOR THE POOR

Thus says the Lord:

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loosen the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?

Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?

Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the LORD shall be your rearguard.

Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, 'Here I am.'

If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday.

The word of the Lord

THE RESPONSE TO THE PSALM IS

A light rises in the darkness for the upright.

.A light rises in the darkness for the upright;
he is generous, merciful, and righteous.

It goes well for the man who deals generously and lends,
who conducts his affairs with justice.

A light rises in the darkness for the upright.

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*He will never be moved;
for ever shall the upright be remembered.*

*He has no fear of evil news;
with a firm heart, he trusts in the LORD.*

A light rises in the darkness for the upright.

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With a steadfast heart he will not fear.

Open-handed, he gives to the poor;

his justice stands firm for ever.

His might shall be exalted in glory.

A light rises in the darkness for the upright.

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THE SECOND READING IS FROM THE FIRST LETTER
OF ST PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS

I, when I came to you, brothers and sisters,
did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God
with lofty speech or wisdom.

For I decided to know nothing among you
except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

And I was with you in weakness
and in fear and much trembling,
and my speech and my message were not in plausible words
of wisdom,

but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,
so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men
but in the power of God.

The word of the Lord

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia.

I am the light of the world, says the Lord;
whoever follows me will have the light of life.

Alleluia.

A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING
TO MATTHEW

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples,
‘You are the salt of the earth,
but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored?
It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out
and trampled under people’s feet.

‘You are the light of the world.
A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.
Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a
stand,
and it gives light to all in the house.
In the same way, let your light shine before others,
so that they may see your good works
and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.’

THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD

THE REFLECTION

Growing up in the 1970s there was uncertainty about what being a Catholic meant. The Church had not changed but had developed. Most RE teaching I remember struggled in the absence of a syllabus and was old fashioned or in the realms of medieval philosophy.

You have to be special to carry out the Mission that Jesus wants of you; he told the disciples and is telling us today. To be special you have to know what you are doing and be ready for any questions which might challenge you. We live in a strange land and have the real opportunity in our witness to bring people to an encounter with Christ.

Lent is the opportunity to come to a change of heart, another meaning of the Greek *metanoia*, instead of repent or turn away from sin. In a parish most of us have done our education in RE and it stopped at School. In 1993 Pope John Paul II persuaded his team to get together an updated catechism explaining Catholic teaching. Pope Benedict authorised a clearer and easier version called Youcat. It was meant for schools and colleges but is challenging for adults to read and take ownership of the meaning. The adult group who came together last July were impressed with the teaching of the social value of property because this had hardly been touched upon in the tradition of teaching but is very much a feature of the life and challenge in schools now.

Catholics live with a mixture of Liturgy – our public prayer together, moral behaviour and our private prayer for ourselves and for others. It is right to pray for ourselves – a common idea in the Sacrament of Confession.

For Newsletter

LEARN ABOUT YOUR FAITH Sycamore is a course consisting of four online sessions, one hour each, which explores our Catholic faith from first principles. The course runs for four consecutive Tuesdays starting at 8pm on March 10 with two further courses starting May 5

and September 8 respectively. More details - T: 07983 524 727 E:
mflkent@rcaos.org.uk