

Monday 11th January 2021

Week 1 in Ordinary Time

First reading: Hebrews 1:1-6, Gospel: Mark 1:14-20

The first reading from the letter to the Hebrews states that over the history of the Jewish people, God has called them in many ways; these being mainly through prophets, priests (religious leaders) and kings. We have, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, a lot of their teaching in what we call the Old Testament. Through the various characters we read about, such as Abraham, Isaiah, King David, Jeremiah and so on, God revealed Himself to us, but always indirectly. With the Incarnation, that is the birth of Jesus Christ, God comes to us in person. In Christ we have God on earth. Whatever He does, God is doing, so we can say that it is God lying in the manger in His human nature, God growing up in Nazareth in His human nature, and then as a grown man, God teaching and healing in His human nature.

In Christ, God speaks to us directly, personally, no longer through the medium of priests, prophets and kings. Jesus is the true priest, the one High priest who offers the sacrifice of Himself for our salvation. He is the true prophet as He speaks God's Word directly, face to face, not through other people. And He is the true King whose kingdom is not of this world but encompasses it.

Therefore, in the Gospel when we read about Jesus' invitation to the first disciples, it is God in His human nature inviting them to follow Him. Simon (Peter) and Andrew, James and John, heard this invitation not just in their heads but in their hearts too. Something made them follow this extraordinary person. That something is the grace of the Holy Spirit who inspired them to want to know more.

The invitation of Jesus is for each of us too. The Holy Spirit gives us the grace to respond too. May be re-read the Gospel and stop where it says, "Jesus said to them". Read instead,

"Jesus says to me..... (add your name) follow me."

Ask the Holy Spirit to give you the grace to respond.