



## SECOND READING [ 1 Corinthians 7 (29-31) ]

***I tell you, brothers and sisters, the time is running out.***

***From now on, let those having wives act as not having them, those weeping as not weeping, those rejoicing as not rejoicing, those buying as not owning, those using the world as not using it fully.***

***For the world in its present form is passing away.***

In our ordinary life we have to fulfill different roles and actions, such as studying, working, getting married, traveling, crying, rejoicing, buying, selling, etc. Paul wants to remind us that above all these things we must be ready at all times to meet Christ at his Second Coming. Paul does not ask us to abandon the things of our habitual life, but rather to put the things of faith first and to anticipate our gaze on the horizon, beyond our earthly life.

With this attitude we are then going to meet Christ in our marriage, in our mourning, in our joy, in our business, etc. This is an attitude that will allow us to meet Christ not only in the Church, when we go to Mass, but in every moment of our ordinary life.

- (1) Have you had the feeling that time flies by? In what way do you think that feeling that time is short leads us to "take advantage" of the things of this world more?
- (2) Do you think that the culture in which we live facilitates an attitude of detachment from things?
- (3) What would be the things that you should appreciate less to value more the matters of Christ?
- (4) Does the attitude of detachment mean a abandonment of our responsibilities? Why?

## GOSPEL [ Mark 1 (14-20) ]

***After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God: "This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."***

***As he passed by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting their nets into the sea; they were fishermen.***

***Jesus said to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." Then they abandoned their nets and followed him. He walked along a little farther and saw James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They too were in a boat mending their nets. Then he called them. So they left their father Zebedee in the boat along with the hired men and followed him.***



The message of this gospel takes place immediately after the arrest and execution of John the Baptist. While his message still resonates with the urge for repentance and conversion, something new and radically different is taking place.

The reader or listener of this passage comes across a message from Jesus Christ according to which "the appointed time has already passed" and that the kingdom of God is within our reach. Jesus exhorts Peter, James, John and Andrew to leave their networks and abandon the life that they have had until then. He urges them to follow him, to enter into a special relationship with him, to be his disciples and to share the mission he has to carry out.

The enthusiastic response of those men is striking, although it cannot be denied that they will also have their moments of doubt and confusion. In Mark's Gospel, these disciples are the ones who will have the privilege of witnessing a foretaste of the glorious

divinity of Jesus. But they will also be the ones who will have the wrong image of his mission, or will fail him at some crucial moments.

Mark presents us with a very human image of the apostles, of people capable of committing the same foolish things as ours, with mean feelings or immature behaviors such as those we can sometimes have. And yet Christ did not withdraw their call from him. Based on this, we can feel

equally qualified to follow Jesus Christ, who despite our limitations invites us to work with him, because he is not so interested in our past but in our future, of which, he himself, with the help of His grace will help us produce something better.

- (1) What do you think it was that allowed those men to abandon their nets to respond so promptly to the call of Jesus?
- (2) Have you responded to the call of Jesus? To what extent? Something? A little bit? Acceptably? Much? Fully? Do you think you could still do better? Is there something holding you back?
- (3) What attracts you to Jesus? Is it enough to make you his apostle?
- (4) Do you think that your Christian life can be described as that of a true “fisher of men”?
- (5) If you are active in the Church, is your ministry limited to those who are already active or are you also “fishing” for people to come to the Church and live your same Christian faith?

### CLOSING PRAYER

Leader: *Lord of the day and night, of the beginning and of the end: At the closing of this meeting, once again we lift up our hearts to You, divine source of all life.*

All: **We thank you for the gifts you have bestowed on us. We thank you for the love expressed in companionship and understanding, mutual respect and shared ideas. We give you thanks for your holy power that will help us in our concerns that we have shared. For these and all the gifts that come from You, we give you thanks.**

Leader: *Lord hear our prayers* (attendees can propose their own needs of prayer)

All: **In the same way in which we have being blessed by your presence as we meet, we ask now to bless our safe return to our homes. May your holy blessing be over us + in the name of the Father ...**

Leader: *May the King of the eternal glory gather us together in His heavenly banquet. Amen.*

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Mark 1:16-20