

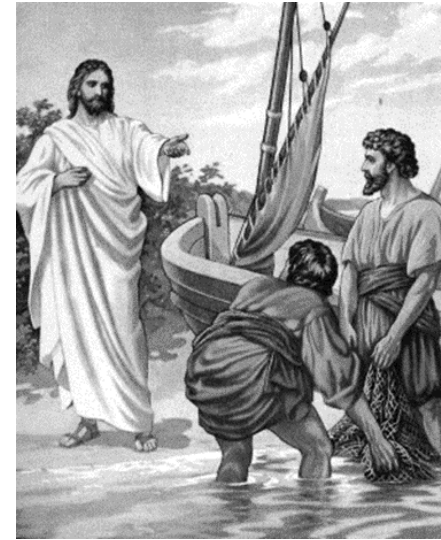
5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

ST. JOSEPH'S NEWSLETTER

Thursday, February 14: Saint Cyril and Saint Methodius

Cyril and Methodius are sometimes called the Apostles to the Slavs for their work as missionaries. The two brothers were born in Thessalonika, Greece, in the 9th century. (Cyril adopted that name late in life; his name at birth was Constantine.) Because they could speak the Slavic language, likely because of the number of Slavic people living in the region, they were sent as missionaries first to what is now Ukraine, and then to Moravia, situated between Byzantium and the Germanic peoples. They worked to make the liturgy and Scripture available in the vernacular, and Cyril devised an alphabet, which some feel in the precursor to the Cyrillic alphabet. While they encountered political opposition, they did enjoy the support of Pope Adrian II.

Cyril died in Rome, while Methodius was consecrated a bishop and returned to Moravia. In 1980 Pope John Paul II declared Cyril and Methodius patrons of Europe.



Gospel-Luke 5:1-11

While the crowd was pressing in on Jesus and listening to the word of God, he was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret. He saw two boats there alongside the lake; the fishermen had disembarked and were washing their nets. Getting into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, he asked him to put out a short distance from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. After he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch." Simon said in reply, "Master, we have worked hard all night and have caught nothing, but at your command I will lower the nets." When they had done this, they caught a great number of fish and their nets were tearing. They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come to help them. They came and filled both boats so that the boats were in danger of sinking. When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at the knees of Jesus and said, "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man." For astonishment at the catch of fish they had made seized him and all those with him, and likewise James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners of Simon. Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men." When they brought their boats to the shore, they left everything and followed him.

ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH 37 GARDEN ROAD, HONG KONG

T: (852) 2522-3992 F: (852) 2537-7463 W: <http://www.stjosephs.hk> E: saintjoseph@gmail.com

Eucharistic Celebrations

Weekdays: 7:45 a.m., 12 noon & 6:00 p.m. Anticipated Sunday Masses: Saturday 6:00 p.m.
Sundays: 7, 8, 9, 10, 11:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m. Tagalog Masses: 1, 2:30 & 4:00 p.m.
Sunday School Mass at St. Joseph's College, 7 Kennedy Road, Hong Kong 9 a.m.

INTRODUCTION TO THE MASS

Today's readings illustrate how God chooses his ministers. He reserves a special place for those who acknowledge their unworthiness. Knowing their call is a pure gift from the Lord, God's servants then remain humble. May this celebration enkindle in us the desire to respond to God's call to service. God calls us in little ways each day. For the times we have not answered the Lord's call we ask for forgiveness... *I confess...*

HEADINGS FOR READINGS

Isaiah 6: 1-2, 3-8 - The call of prophet Isaiah.

1 Corinthians 15: 1-11 - The Lord called Paul to be an apostle.

Luke 5: 1-11 - The call of the first disciples.

SCRIPTURE NOTE

Simon Peter, the fisherman, is the first to be called personally by Jesus in Luke's Gospel.

His calling resembles Isaiah's commissioning in the First Reading: Confronted with the holiness of the Lord, both Peter and Isaiah are overwhelmed by a sense of their own sinfulness and inadequacy. Yet each experiences the Lord's forgiveness and is sent to preach the good news of His mercy to the world.

No one is "fit to be called an apostle," Paul recognizes in today's Epistle. But by "the grace of God," even a persecutor of the Church — as Paul once was — can be lifted up for the Lord's service.

In the Old Testament, humanity was unfit for the divine—no man could stand in God's presence and live. But in Jesus, we're made able to speak with Him face-to-face, to taste His Word on our tongue.

Today's scene from Isaiah is recalled in every Mass. Before reading the Gospel, the priest silently asks God to cleanse his lips that he might worthily proclaim His Word.

God's Word comes to us as it came to Peter, Paul, Isaiah, and today's Psalmist — as a personal call to leave everything and follow Him, to surrender our weaknesses in order to be filled with His strength.

Simon put out into deep waters even though, as a professional fisherman, he knew it would be foolhardy to expect to catch anything. In humbling himself before the Lord's command, he was exalted — his nets filled to overflowing; later, as Paul tells us, he will become the first to see the risen Lord.

Jesus has made us worthy to receive Him in the company of angels in God's holy Temple. On our knees like Peter, with the humility of David in today's Psalm, we thank Him with all our hearts and join in the unending hymn that Isaiah heard around God's altar:

"Holy, holy, holy". (Scott Hann)

The
WORD
by name
is
Jesus Christ

Calendars

Monday, February 11: Our Lady of Lourdes

The veneration of Mary as Our Lady of Lourdes arose first in popular devotion and later in Church's liturgy.

In 1858 Mary, the Mother of Jesus, appeared to Bernadette Soubirous in a cave at Massabielle, near Lourdes in France. Just four years earlier, in 1854, the Church had declared the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, so when the "beautiful woman" of Bernadette's visions identified herself as the Immaculate Conception, there was initial skepticism. Although others accompanied Bernadette to the grotto, no one else could see or hear the visions. It did not take very long for an Episcopal Commission, an official inquiry, to state: "We judge that Mary, the Immaculate Mother of God, did really appear to Bernadette Soubirous on February 11th; 1858, and on certain subsequent days, 18 times in all, in the Grotto of Massabielle, near the town of Lourdes; that this appearance bears every mark of truth and that the belief of the faithful is well-grounded.

A few years later, this date was added to the list of Marian feasts to honour the mysterious beauty of the Immaculate Conception.

