

January 15, 2023

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Is 49:3, 5-6

1 Cor 1:1-3

Jn 1:29-34

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

GROW: I'm not sure I've ever seen a dove close up. The dove is a powerful symbol for Jews and Christians alike, representing love and a deep sense of peace. The dove has special significance for Christians, as a sign of the Holy Spirit. In today's Gospel, John the Baptist testifies, "I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from heaven and remain upon him ... He is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit." The Baptist further testifies that Jesus is the Son of God. The *catechism* (701) reminds us that John the Baptist not only paved the way for Jesus, but for all of us who followed: "The Spirit comes down and remains in the purified hearts of the baptized." Through our baptism, we can follow in the footsteps of John the Baptist by telling others about Jesus. The Holy Spirit will give us what we need in order to become messengers of love and peace to those we encounter.

GO EVANGELIZE | PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

GO: During his 1988 campaign, President George H.W. Bush used the phrase "a thousand points of light" to describe volunteers "spread like stars throughout the nation, doing good." This phrase came to mind as I listened to the reading from Isaiah, in which the Lord vows to make Israel "a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth." John the Baptist baptizes with water to prepare the people for Jesus' coming. As we settle into the dark days of winter, today's readings challenge us to become points of light to others, leading them to Christ. How we do that will differ for each of us – praying for others, visiting an elderly relative, writing that letter we've been putting off. We may not be prophets like Isaiah and John the Baptist, but we have the gift of the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, to inspire us.

PRAY: Today's psalm reminds me of the popular hymn, "Here I am, Lord." While I love the melody, the psalmist offers a simple spoken version that we can pray to point ourselves in the direction of Jesus each day: "Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will."