

13th Sunday of the Year A

First Reading 2 Kings 4:8-11.14-16

One day as Elisha was on his way to Shunem, a woman of rank who lived there pressed him to stay and eat there. After this he always broke his journey for a meal when he passed that way.

She said to her husband, "Look, I am sure the man who is constantly passing our way must be a holy man of God. Let us build him a small room on the roof, and put him a bed in it, and a table and chair and lamp; whenever he comes to us he can rest there." One day when he came, he retired to the upper room and lay down. "What can be done for her then?" he asked. Gehazi answered, "Well, she has no son and her husband is old." Elisha said, "Call her." The servant called her and she stood at the door. "This time next year," he said, "you will hold a son in your arms."

Second Reading Romans 6:3-4.8-11

You have been taught that when we were baptised in Christ Jesus we were baptised in his death; in other words, when we were baptised we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life.

But we believe that having died with Christ we shall return to life with him: Christ, as we know, having been raised from the dead will never die again. Death has no power over him any more. When he died, he died, once for all, to sin, so his life now is life with God; and in that way, you too must consider yourselves to be dead to sin but alive for God in Christ Jesus.

Gospel Matthew 10:37-42

Jesus instructed the Twelve as follows: "Anyone who prefers father or mother to me is not worthy of me. Anyone who prefers son or daughter to me is not worthy of me. Anyone who does not take his cross and follow in my footsteps is not worthy of me. Anyone who finds his life will lose it; anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it. Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me; and those who welcome me welcome the one who sent me. Anyone who welcomes a prophet because he is a prophet will have a prophet's reward; and anyone who welcomes a holy man because he is a holy man will have a holy man's reward. If anyone gives so much as a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is a disciple, then I tell you solemnly, he will most certainly not lose his reward."

Meditation

There is no union with Christ that is not a "crucial" adventure. This union implies a radical detachment because of him, but it is also the means, with him, to find everything.

The disciple's attachment to Christ is an exclusive and heroic passion. It is one to which only God has a right. This attachment breaks whatever bonds would hinder our leaving all things to follow Christ on the way to his cross. We begin with what we hold most dear, our family relationships.

A father's loving affection, the tenderness of a mother, the gentle friendship of brothers and sisters, all of which are good and legitimate, cannot be preferred to Christ. He must be preferred to self.

It is not that the Lord desires us to be heartless, as hard as stone, but the condition of a disciple demands a one-to-one relationship with the Master. "My child, give me your heart" (Pr 23:26), says the author of Proverbs. Moreover, when we give ourselves entirely to the Lord, he gives us a love which transforms all our relationships. Humble and insignificant though they may seem, the disciples of Christ bear his presence. But they can only fulfil his task insofar as they are able to spend themselves in the service of him whom they announce and by whom they are sent.