**Ordinary Time 4 C Lectionary Catechesis**

**Fr. Alan Hartway, CPPS**

**Guardian Angels Parish in Mead, CO**

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| The Bible is both one of the most read books on earth and one of the most misunderstood. It is disturbing when it challenges our comfort zone, and at once comforts us with a merciful love that calls all of us as disciples. Perhaps one theme here is vocation, and another (Psalm 71) a humble life submission to God. Neither road is set out as th easy road to travel. The very next thing Jesus does is to call his discples to take this road of disturbing and radical love iwith him. |

**FIRST READING: Jeremiah 1, 4-5. 17-19**

The “vocation narrative” of this prophet opens with one of the most frequently right to life quotes in the Bible. The point is that prophetic certification of authenticity comes from God alone; in other words one cannot just assume this for and about one’s self. The missing verses tell of the prophet’s initial reluctance and excuses with God’s response that God will empower the prophet with His word. Who are to be addressed regardless of the persecution sure to follow? The leadership and in fact all the people. The sin? Adulterating religion. Sound familiar? It is the story of our culture today that seeks Christianity lite and an everything goes relativism. Unfortunately for us, the Church’s representation has been permanently damaged by one sort of scandal after the other. Human stupidity knows no limits. The US Church is rarely prophetic, but merely bourgeoisie.

**Vs. 5: CCC 2270** From this citation through 2275 you will find the CCC’s statement on abortion. Vs. 5 is one of those most frequently used verses. The Bible teaches here about life before physical birth in God’s formation of the person and dedication of the person to some purpose of God’s.

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| **KNOW YOUR**  **FAITH** | Why does the Church have its strong stand on life issues?  What is the work of the prophet as you read this passage? |
| **LIVE YOUR**  **FAITH** | In what way does the prophetic voice disturb your comfort zone?  What have you personally ever been “a pillar of iron, a wall of bronze” about in your life? |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | How does the Church today share with our culture that truth which challenges us?  What is the connection or relationship between the prophet and the evangelizer? |
| **WORSHIP** | How does the Church actuate the prophetic voice in the liturgy?  In what venue does the prophet speak in and to the Church today? |

**First Reading**

**RESPONSORIAL: Psalm 71, 1-2 3-4. 5-6. 15. 17**

My edition of the NABrev calls this a “Prayer in Time of Old Age”. Most of this comes from the portion we are not using. Vs. 6 speaks of the formation in the mother’s womb, much like in Jeremiah. The supplicant cries out for divine assistance, confessing the praise of God who has been fundamental to the psalmist’s life from conception through old age and death. God as refuge is a very ancient image, repeated here in the psalm several times.

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| **KNOW YOUR**  **FAITH** | What do we mean when we say that God saves us?  Which acts of God’s deliverance do you most remember and proclaim by your life? |
| **LIVE YOUR**  **FAITH** | Share your reflections and experiences of God as your refuge and safety.  How do you treat the elderly? |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | “A portent to many” refers to a primitive way of thinking that God’s wrath smites the sick and the aging. How ca we talk in our culture about suffering with dignity, or suffering as a learning experience?  How can you use these verses in evagelization? |
| **WORSHIP** | How do our aging members of family and parish best enable our proclaiming of God’s salvation? In other words are they present in our liturgical life?  Church building have a history of being sanctuaries. What happened to that practice and how might it look today? |

**Responsorial Psalm**

**SECOND READING: I Corinthians 12, 31 – 13,13**

This chapter is one of those most frequently read and beloved of the New Testament. It is ubiquitous at weddings. There are profound teachings here. We live in a culture where it seems the greatest gift is how much money we can make and spend; the human person is thought of in terms of financial or monetary worth. Our capacity to give and receive love are barely part of the discussion when people speak of “quality of life” or “dignity”. Love of this sort, not the gushy and sugarly version, remains a prized goal today; it defines the lives of the saints. St. Paul is eloquent and lyrical here more than any other part of his writings. The text is an overload of possibilities for reflection. Love endures even in a jaded culture like ours.

**Chapter 13: CCC 735, 800** The disciple is called to love as God has loved us, which is only possible because of the power of the Holy Spirit. Charisms manifest the “apostolic vitality” of the Church; each should receive their charism and actualize it in their lives with gratitude, especially our capacity to love.

**Vss. 1-4: CCC 1826** “Charity is superior to all the virtues.”

**Vss. 4-7: CCC 1825** As Christ has loved while we were still sinners, so too we must love even our enemies, and especially the poor.

**Vs. 5: CCC 953** The Church is a communion in charity. “Charity does not insist on its own way.”

**Vs. 8: CCC 773** Love binds the communion of the human person and God, which is for the purpose of the disciple’s holiness of life. The Bride (the Church) responds to God’s sacrificial love, like Mary. “The Marian dimension of the Church precedes the Petrine.” John Paul II

**Vs. 12: CCC 163, 164, 314, 1023, 1720, 2519** Faith already begins in us our goal of seeing God face to face and that we will see what we only now know by faith. Faith enables us now to see God “dimly, as in a mirror.” Our experiences of this violent world and the lure of materialism shakes our faith. We know by faith God as the Lord of creation and of all history. God guides creation to the “definitive Sabbath rest.” Those who die in grace shall be with Christ forever. In #1720, St. Augustine is quoted about our eternal rest and seeing God. Purity of heart enables us to see God, now by faith, and at the end, in fact.

**Vs. 13: CCC 1813, 1826, 1841** The theological virtues (faith, hope and charity) shape the disciple’s life. God gives these virtues to us manifesting among us the Holy Spirit. The greatest gift is charity.

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| **KNOW YOUR**  **FAITH** | The Bible defines God as love. What does this mean?  What is the “definitive Sabbath rest”? |
| **LIVE YOUR**  **FAITH** | Where does your love for God rank among the loves of your life?  How do you live out the theological virtues? |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | What charisms do evangelizers need the most?  How does a “communion of charity” effectively reach out to others? |
| **WORSHIP** | How do you experience the love of Christ in the liturgy?  Try vss. 4-7 as an examination of conscience. |

**Second Reading**

**GOSPEL: Luke 4, 21-30 Jesus is Expelled from the Synagogue**

Jesus announces the prophetic fulfillment in himself. This leads to an ambivalent response from the synagogue: amazement on the one hand and questions about his authority. Jesus’ retort about healing and accepting prophets and God’s work among foreigners infuriates them. Mob violence ensues. Jesus peaceably passes through the enraged crowd. Jesus’ sets out that his mission is universal and inclusive. This reading completes the incident begun the previous Sunday.

**Vss. 16-22: CCC 1286** Confirmation is foreshadowed in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus at his baptism.

**Vss. 16-21: CCC 436** Jesus as the Christ fulfills the prophetic hope and promise of a Messiah to save the people.

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| **KNOW YOUR**  **FAITH** | What is the connection between Baptism and Confirmation?  What were the Messianic promises of the prophets? |
| **LIVE YOUR**  **FAITH** | What are the challenging sayings of Jesus for you?  Do you ever find yourself being angry with God? |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | How does your parish reach out to diverse ethnicities, cultures, and languages?  Who can receive the sacrament of the sick? |
| **WORSHIP** | Share your reflections on the liturgy as a fulfillment of the prophets.  The proverbial definition of a good Jesuit liturgy is that no one got hurt. What parts of the liturgy in your experience causes pain? |

**Gospel**

**Next Sunday: OT 5 C: Isaiah 6, 1-2a. 3-4; Psalm 138; I Corinthians 15, 1-11; Luke 5, 1-11**