

# livingtheword

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Hearing and Living the Sunday Readings

## Reading I

[Jer 1:4-5, 17-19](#)

The word of the LORD came to me, saying:  
Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,  
before you were born I dedicated you,  
a prophet to the nations I appointed you.

Prepare yourself for action;  
stand up and tell them  
all that I command you.  
Be not crushed on their account,  
as though I would leave you crushed before  
them;  
for it is I this day  
who have made you a fortified city,  
a pillar of iron, a wall of brass,  
against the whole land:  
against Judah's kings and princes,  
against its priests and people.  
They will fight against you but not prevail over  
you, for I am with you to deliver you, says the  
LORD.

## Responsorial Psalm

[Ps 71:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 15-17](#)

**I will sing of your salvation.**

In you, O LORD, I take refuge;  
let me never be put to shame.  
In your justice rescue me, and deliver me;  
incline your ear to me, and save me.

**I will sing of your salvation.**

Be my rock of refuge,  
a stronghold to give me safety,  
for you are my rock and my fortress.  
O my God, rescue me from the hand of the  
wicked.

**I will sing of your salvation.**

For you are my hope, O Lord;

my trust, O God, from my youth.  
On you I depend from birth;  
from my mother's womb you are my strength.

**I will sing of your salvation.**

My mouth shall declare your justice,  
day by day your salvation.

O God, you have taught me from my youth,  
and till the present I proclaim your wondrous  
deeds.

**I will sing of your salvation.**

## Reading II

[1 Cor 12:31—13:13 or 13:4-13](#)

Brothers and sisters:

Love is patient, love is kind.

It is not jealous, it is not pompous,

it is not inflated, it is not rude,

it does not seek its own interests,

it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over  
injury,

it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but  
rejoices with the truth.

It bears all things, believes all things,  
hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never fails.

If there are prophecies, they will be brought to  
nothing;

if tongues, they will cease;

if knowledge, it will be brought to nothing.

For we know partially and we prophesy  
partially, but when the perfect comes, the  
partial will pass away.

When I was a child, I used to talk as a child,  
think as a child, reason as a child;  
when I became a man, I put aside childish  
things. At present we see indistinctly, as in a  
mirror, but then face to face.

At present I know partially;  
then I shall know fully, as I am fully known.  
So faith, hope, love remain, these three;  
but the greatest of these is love.

## Gospel

[Lk 4:21-30](#)

Jesus began speaking in the synagogue, saying:

“Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing.” And all spoke highly of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth.

They also asked, “Isn’t this the son of Joseph?” He said to them, “Surely you will quote me this proverb, ‘Physician, cure yourself,’ and say, ‘Do here in your native place the things that we heard were done in Capernaum.’” And he said, “Amen, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own native place. Indeed, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah when the sky was closed for three and a half years and a severe famine spread over the entire land. It was to none of these that Elijah was sent, but only to a widow in Zarephath in the land of Sidon.

Again, there were many lepers in Israel during the time of Elisha the prophet; yet not one of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.” When the people in the synagogue heard this, they were all filled with fury. They rose up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town had been built, to hurl him down headlong. But Jesus passed through the midst of them and went away.

## Reflection Questions

- Reading the passages slowly and reflectively, what word, phrase or idea strikes you in the readings? (circle or underline them)
- What do you think God is trying to say to you personally through these words?
- Jeremiah was known as the ‘weeping prophet’ because people did not listen to his message (King Jehoiakim even burned one of Jeremiah’s manuscripts). He experienced God’s word deeply and in the midst of false ‘prosperity prophets’ who declared God was looking favorably on his people and good times were coming, Jeremiah shares his personal call and his preparedness for rejection. What is the challenge of being a ‘prophet to the nations’ like Jeremiah today? Do you feel formed and called by God to stand up against something in society? What has been your response so far?
- St Paul continues discussing the ‘elitist’ problem in the Corinthian community. Some people were setting themselves apart as a ‘spiritual elite’ with boastful talk of their charisms and gifts. Gifts and charisms mean nothing if love is absent. If you were to evaluate your life by the qualities of love in the second reading what is revealed about your relationships, life-style, presence within the church community?
- Jesus continues to speak to his home-town. In an ‘honour and shame’ culture of the ancient middle east, an expectation is placed over Jesus to bring honor, glory, acclaim to Nazareth. Be our ‘local’ prophet, set up a healing station here in Nazareth like you have been doing at Capernaum! Their attitude and concern is reputation rather than conversion. Jesus confronts them. In what ways does ‘reputation’ take priority over ‘conversion’ in your life? When was the last time you experienced the ‘cost’ of discipleship like Jeremiah and Jesus?
- Jesus identifies himself with the mission of the great prophets of Elijah and Elisha who were sent out to nearby gentile lands (Sidon) and people (Naaman the Syrian) which infuriates them. They react violently to the idea that God’s favor is also for the gentiles and not exclusively to Israel. Why do you think removing barriers and cultural walls meets resistance? What is beneath the categories of right / wrong, clean / unclean?
- What is one action that you will do to ‘livetheword’ this week?