



3RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Jesus began to preach
and say, "Repent, for the
kingdom of heaven
is at hand." - Mt 4:17

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

SERVING ST. MARY'S/ MALTA, SACRED HEART/ DODSON, ST. FRANCIS /SACO

SUNDAY, JANUARY 25, 2026

Contact Us

Fr. Felix Nayak, Pastor

Cell 406.946.2195 or Rectory 406.654.1446

Deacon Tom DePuydt

deacontom@saintmarysmalta.org or 406.674.7060

Administrative Assistant (Macie Hould) office hours are Tuesday and Thursday, 10am to 2pm at RE Center

office@saintmarysmalta.org or (406) 654-1311

Please check our website for additional information.

Weekly bulletins are posted in full color with several additions – check them out here: <https://www.saintmarysmalta.org/bulletins>

Confession – Friday's 9-10am, Saturday's 11-noon or contact Fr. Felix directly for an appointment.

Adoration – every Friday 9:00-10:00am immediately following daily Mass.

MASS SCHEDULE:

Saturday vigil – Malta 5:00pm Sunday – Saco 8:30am, Malta 10:30am, Dodson 12:30pm

Daily Mass (Monday thru Friday) – Malta 8:30am

Homily by Fr. Felix:

III Sunday in Ordinary Time –(A): Isaiah 8:23–9:3; 1 Corinthians 1:10–13, 17; Matthew 4:12–23

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

In today's liturgy, the Word of God draws us into a powerful movement, from darkness to light, from division to unity, and from passivity to mission. The three readings are constructed around a single divine action: God enters human history to transform it by calling ordinary people like us, to conversion and to share in His saving work.

Today's First Reading speaks to people living in deep distress. They are wounded by war, humiliation, and loss of hope. Isaiah names their reality honestly: darkness, anguish, and oppression. In this hopeless situation, God makes a stunning promise of light, and this light is the presence of God. Where despair dominates, God kindles joy. Where burdens crush, God breaks the yoke.

This prophecy finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ. In Him, God's light enters the darkest corners of human life, sin, suffering, fear, and death. Today, Isaiah's words are addressed to us. Many still walk in darkness: broken relationships, addiction, loneliness, injustice, spiritual emptiness. The message is clear: God has not abandoned His people. The light has already dawned in Christ, and it continues to shine wherever hearts are open to Him.

Saint Paul in the second reading exposes darkness within the Church, the darkness of division. The Corinthians were proud of their spiritual affiliations: "I belong to Paul," "I belong to Apollos," "I belong to Cephas." Their focus had shifted from Christ to personalities.

Paul responds sharply: "Is Christ divided?" This question pierces the heart of every age, including our own. Today, divisions still wound the Body of Christ, over ideologies, liturgical preferences, ethnic identities, personal egos, and power struggles. When Christ is pushed to the margins,

unity collapses. True Christian unity means a shared center, Jesus Christ crucified and risen. Paul reminds us that we are saved by the power of the Cross. The Cross humbles us, strips away pride, and calls us back to what truly matters. A united Church becomes a living sign that God's reconciling love is real.

In the Gospel, we witness the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. Jesus begins His public ministry not in Jerusalem, the center of religious power, but in Galilee, a region considered marginal and mixed with Gentiles. Light appears where it is least expected.

Jesus' first proclamation is radical: "Repent." This is not a threat, but an invitation. Repent means changing one's mind, heart and direction, turning away from darkness toward the light. The reason for repentance is joy-filled: God is near and acting now. Immediately, Jesus calls disciples, fishermen busy with their daily work. He calls them as they are and promises to make them "fishers of men." Their response is striking: "At once they left their nets and followed him."

This call is not limited to the first disciples. Every baptized person is called to conversion, to discipleship, and to mission. To follow Christ means allowing His light to reshape our priorities, our relationships, and our choices. It also means participating in His mission: drawing others into the net of God's mercy and love.

Dear brothers and sisters, today, we are invited to live in that light. When we turn toward Him, darkness loses its power, unity becomes possible, and ordinary lives become instruments of God's extraordinary grace.

May this Eucharist strengthen us to walk as children of the light, united in Christ, and courageous in mission so that through us others may see the great light and rejoice in the salvation of God. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

A **Carroll College Scholarship**, given in memory of the deceased priests of the Diocese of Helena and the Diocese of Great Falls- Billings, is being offered to one prospective student from our Parish. To be considered for the scholarship recipients must be planning to attend Carroll for the first time in the fall of 2026.

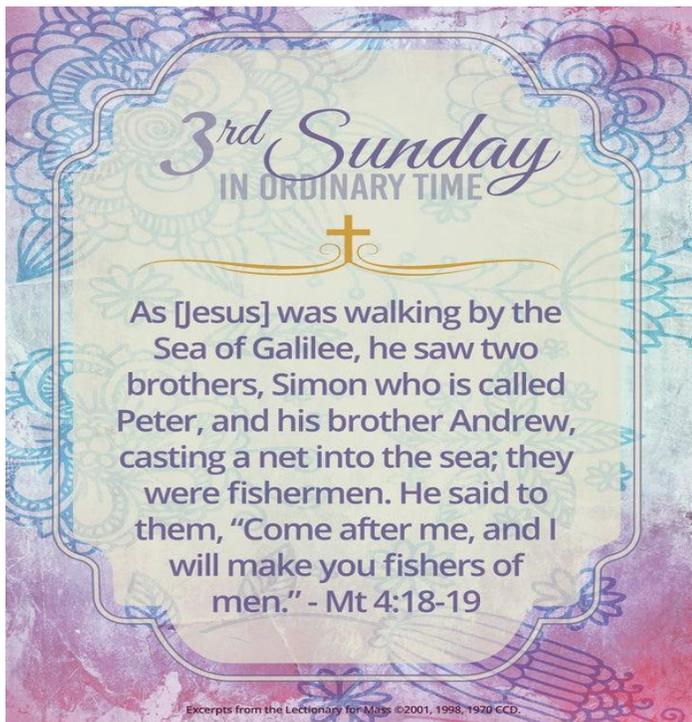
Please email or call the office at, office@saintmarysmalta.org or (406) 654-1311, with a recipient's name to be considered for the scholarship. There is no application to fill out. The deadline to get names to the office for consideration of the scholarship is **March 1st**. After all names are gathered the councils and Father Felix will choose the recipient for our Parish and send that information to Carroll College.

Considering donating to the church? If you're interested in exploring donation options beyond regular Mass Offerings, please reach out to a Finance Council Member for further discussion. We truly appreciate your ongoing generosity, which plays a vital role in helping our church thrive.

*The 2026 SEARCH date has been set: **March 20th, 21st, and 22nd**
For more information, please contact Dianne Salsbery,
Becky Bruce, or Alora Jesson*

If you would like to have another Priest perform a service (funeral, wedding, baptism, ect.) in our Parish, please contact Fr. Felix so he may grant his permission.

Week of January 18th, 2026 Donations: Malta \$1971, Saco \$340, Dodson \$435



Prayer Requests

*If you have a prayer request, please contact **Dianne Salsbery at 406-654-4675**. Names will be listed in the bulletin for a minimum of 30 days.*

Please pray for –Kylie Starkey, Chuck Nurville, David Cochran, Dawn Goodheart Jones, the family of Skyla Sisco, Leona Kienenberger, the families of Staci French, Carletta Benson, Joe Simanton, Judy Henry, Adalyn McCollom, Gloria Combs, Corky LaBrie, Dianne Salsbery, Bob Kaluza, Tammy Peterson and those from our area serving in the military.

For the repose of the souls of – Skyla Sisco, Staci French, Shirley Eklund, Alvina Doucette, Derek Davis, KJ Wilke, Jim Robinson, David Williamson, Lee Stevens and all souls in need and pray also for their families that they find comfort and peace.

Next weeks Ministry Volunteers: January 31 & February 1

	Sacristan	Lector	Hospitality	Money Counter
Saturday, 5:00 PM	Gina Webb	Tara Cole Averee Matthews	Linda Manoukian	
Sunday, 10:30 AM	Diane Liebel	Mary LaFond Jeff VanHeel	Lana Fortin	Larry Bauer - Money Counter Becky Bruce - Money Counter

Mass Intentions - to schedule an intention,
please fill out an envelope at the back of the church.
Each Intention is \$10

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK



Saturday 1.24.26	For poor souls r/b Mears Family
Sunday 1.25.26 10:30 Malta	- For all widows & singles r/b Lana Fortin
8:30am Saco	- For the faithful in our Parish
12:30 Dodson	- For all the Mears & Menge's deceased and living family r/b Mears Family
Monday 1.26.26	For the repose of Derek Davis & family r/b Lana Fortin
Tuesday 1.27.26	For the Fortin Family r/b Lana Fortin
Wednesday 1.28.26	For the repose of John & Helen Mears r/b Mears Family
Thursday 1.29.26	For David Hanson r/b Margaret Hanson
Friday 1.30.26	For souls in purgatory r/b Lana Fortin
Saturday 1.31.26	For Lisa Webb r/b Regina Webb
Sunday 2.1.26	For the faithful in our Parish

Finance Council members include:

Mike Ereaux 406-658-2613 (H), 406-654-7803 (C),
7mfe7195@itstriangle.com
Deb Sjostrom 406-654-1451, sjostrom@itstriangle.com.
Lance Hould 406-539-5772, lanceh_99@hotmail.com
Scott King 406-654-7302, sbking1959@gmail.com
Heathyr Knowles 805-264-7350, hjknowles@msn.com
Shyla Sunford 406-399-1484, shylasunford@gmail.com
(Saco)
Bonnie Lankford 406-390-2276, Bonnie4339@hotmail.com
(Dodson)

Meetings are generally the 3rd Thursday of the month. If interested in serving please contact a member of the finance council.

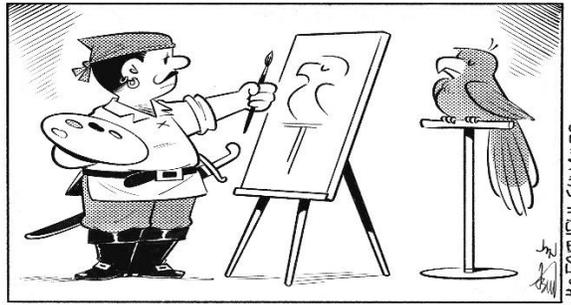
**Daily Readings for the Week of
January 25th:**

Sunday:	Is 8:23-9:3/Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14/1 Cor 1:10-13, 17/Mt 4:12-23 or 4:12-17
Monday:	2 Tm 1:1-8 or Ti 1:1-5/Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 7-8a, 10, 21-22, 25-26/Mk 3:22-30
Tuesday:	2 Sm 6:12b-15, 17-19/Ps 24:7, 8, 9, 10/Mk 3:31-35
Wednesday:	2 Sm 7:4-17/Ps 89:4-5, 27-28, 29-30/Mk 4:1-20
Thursday:	2 Sm 7:18-19, 24-29/Ps 132:1-2, 3-5, 11, 12, 13-14/Mk 4:21-25
Friday:	2 Sm 11:1-4a, 5-10a, 13-17/Ps 51:3-4, 5-6a, 6bcd-7, 10-11/Mk 4:26-34
Saturday:	2 Sm 12:1-7a, 10-17/Ps 51:12-13, 14-15, 16-17/Mk 4:35-41
Next Sunday:	Zep 2:3; 3:12-13/Ps 146:6c-7, 8-9a, 9b-10/1 Cor 1:26-31/Mt 5:1-12a

Parish Council members include:

Alora Snider— 406-399-1675, alora_lynn_09@hotmail.com
Shawn Bleth— 406-654-7303, shawn.bleth@gmail.com
Nancy Ereaux—406-658-2613
Jeff Van Heel—406-266-1133
Joy DePuydt—406-674-5560, joyful@itstriangle.com (Saco)
Leona Kienenberger—406-383-4459,
leona_kienenberger@yahoo.com (Dodson)

"What's a pirate's favorite class in school?"



"Arrrrrrt!"



Students are special members of our community, and we're sending our love and prayers to them today and always!

Annual Catholic Appeal Weekend:

has begun, and we are so thankful for all those who have participated!

Your gift helps sustain the ministries that serve our parishes and communities across Eastern Montana. Pledge envelopes are available in the pews or at the parish office.

Please take a moment to make your gift today.

Prayer for Catechism Students: Dear God, You never stop drawing us closer to You. Pour Your grace upon these young disciples as they learn about You. Attract them. Challenge Them. Love them. Guide them. Bless them. Amen



Diocese of Great Falls-Billings
Office of the Bishop
 PO Box 1399, Great Falls, MT 59403
 406-727-6683 | 1-800-332-9998
www.diocesegfb.org/aca



SEASON of HOPE

A Future of Faith

Dear Friends in Christ,

Growing up in Belt, Montana, I learned early on that both strength and faith define the people of our great state — especially those who work the land, care for their neighbors, and persevere through the ups and downs of every season with hope. Whether in farming, ranching, or everyday life, we know what it means to plant, nurture, and trust that God will bring the harvest in His time.

This year's **Annual Catholic Appeal**, "*A Season of Hope, A Future of Faith*," is about that same spirit — the belief that what we give and build today will sustain the faith of tomorrow. Even if you already support your parish, your participation in the diocesan appeal strengthens our shared mission across all of Eastern Montana. Together, we ensure that our faith continues to grow strong in every part of our diocese.

Your participation and generosity make a direct impact by:

- **Supporting Our Priests:** Providing care, formation, and support for those who serve and have served our communities with dedication and faith.
- **Sustaining the Bishop's Ministry and Mission:** Helping the Church reach and serve even the most rural parts of Eastern Montana.
- **Investing in Catholic Formation and Ministries:** Nurturing not only the current generation, but also the next generation of believers through our schools, youth programs, and parish ministries.

Each gift — no matter the amount — is a seed of hope that grows into a future full of faith. I invite you to prayerfully consider taking part in this year's Appeal, joining your fellow parishioners and friends across Eastern Montana in strengthening the Church we all share.

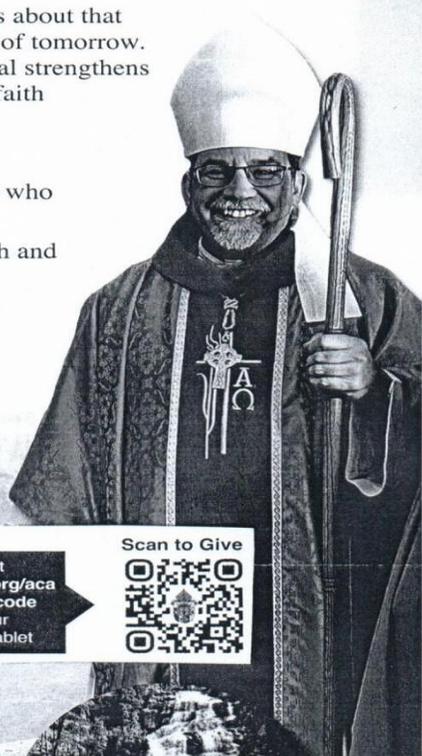
With gratitude and every blessing,

+ Jeffrey M. Fleming

+Jeffrey Fleming
 Bishop of the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings

Give online at
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 to give on your
 smartphone or tablet

Scan to Give



**Caring for those who
 serve our parishes.**



**Supporting the Bishop's ministry
 through unity, leadership and service.**



**Inspiring the next
 generation of faith.**

Weekly Prayer

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light; (Is 9:1)

Psalm:

The Lord is my light and my salvation. (Ps 27)

Second Reading:

I urge you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
that all of you agree in what you say,
and that you be united in the same mind and in the same
purpose. (1 Cor 1:10)

Gospel:

He left Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum by the sea,
in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali,
that what had been said through Isaiah the prophet
might be fulfilled. (Mt 4:13-14)

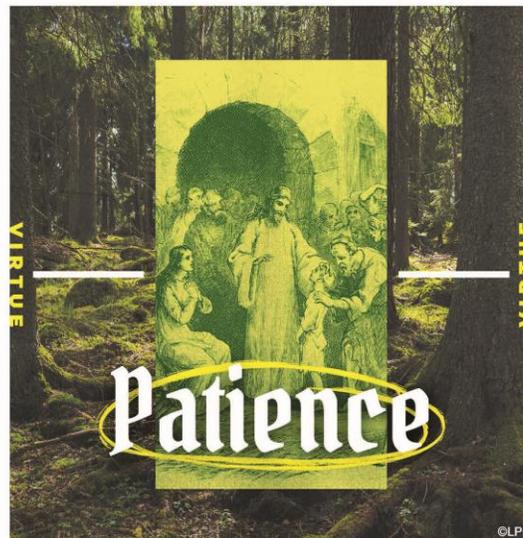
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Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

Peter and Andrew, James and John — they were not expecting God that day. But there he was, right in front of them, beckoning. God stands before us today, and like the Apostles, we often don't see him coming. But still, he beckons. Will we follow?

Observances for the week of January 25, 2026

- Sunday:** 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time;
Celebrate Catholic Schools Week
- Monday:** Sts. Timothy and Titus, Bishops
- Tuesday:** St. Angela Merici, Virgin
- Wednesday:** St. Thomas Aquinas, Priest and Doctor of the Church
- Saturday:** St. John Bosco, Priest
- Next Sunday:** 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time



Virtues, Explained!

In practicing patience, we bear any kind of suffering for a greater good, safeguard our reason against sorrow, and “look at (other people) with God’s gaze knowing how to distinguish their faces from their faults.”

Blessing of Light

Where you have known darkness, may the light stretch and shine. Where you have dwelt in shadows, may the sun reach its gentle rays. Where you have hidden in shame, may you know light-filled redemption, healing, belonging, and rest in Jesus. Amen.

Worship & Meditation

Readings for the week of January 25, 2026

Sunday:

Is 8:23-9:3/Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14/1 Cor 1:10-13,
17/Mt 4:12-23 or 4:12-17

Monday:

2 Tm 1:1-8 or Ti 1:1-5/Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3,
7-8a, 10, 21-22, 25-26/Mk 3:22-30

Tuesday:

2 Sm 6:12b-15, 17-19/Ps 24:7, 8, 9, 10/
Mk 3:31-35

Wednesday:

2 Sm 7:4-17/Ps 89:4-5, 27-28, 29-30/
Mk 4:1-20

Thursday:

2 Sm 7:18-19, 24-29/Ps 132:1-2, 3-5, 11, 12,
13-14/Mk 4:21-25

Friday:

2 Sm 11:1-4a, 5-10a, 13-17/Ps 51:3-4, 5-6a,
6bcd-7, 10-11/Mk 4:26-34

Saturday:

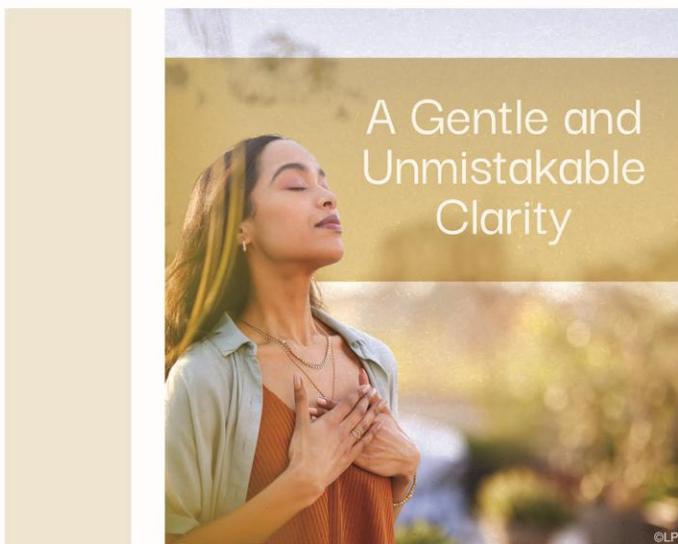
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17/Mk 4:35-41

Next Sunday:

Zep 2:3; 3:12-13/Ps 146:6c-7, 8-9a, 9b-
10/1 Cor 1:26-31/Mt 5:1-12a



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Gospel Meditation

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

I was 22 years old, lying in bed one night while on a pilgrimage, when I suddenly sensed an idea in my mind: “Go to the seminary.” There was no voice, no vision, but a gentle and unmistakable clarity. I simply prayed, “Lord, if that’s from you, let me find great joy in it.” Three days later, my heart was bursting with joy. I dropped everything and entered the seminary. The older I get, the stranger my rather careless and hasty departure seems to me. I followed not because it made sense, or because I was especially brave. I went because the Lord called me.

Something like this happens in today’s Gospel. Jesus walks by Simon, Andrew, James, and John and says, **“Come after me” (Matthew 4:19)**. And *immediately* they leave their nets and follow. There’s no explanation, no hesitation ... just movement. Why? As St. John says, **“In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us” (1 John 4:10)**. They do not leave their nets because his call made perfect, calculable sense. They left them because they were called. And Jesus’ call is powerful.

Take a moment this week to remember when Christ first called you. However small or quiet it was, recall it, and give thanks. The more we marvel that Christ has called us personally, the more passionately and freely we will follow him.

— *Father John Muir*

(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

Mini Reflection: Young or old, believer or non-believer, rich or poor: it doesn't matter who we are. It doesn't matter what our life looks like. If we are a human being, if we have a soul, we stand on the shore of a great and powerful sea, a net in our hands and a hunger in our soul.

Sea of Galilee Moments

Young or old, believer or non-believer, rich or poor, healthy or sick: it doesn't matter who we are. It doesn't matter what our life looks like. If we are a human being, if we have a soul, we stand on the shore of a great and powerful sea, a net in our hands and a hunger in our soul.

So what's in the sea? I don't know about yours, but mine is filled with feelings of inadequacy. It's filled with fear and resentment and confusion. It's filled with misplaced pride. It's deep. It's dark. It's well-stocked.

I cast my net, over and over again. What else is there to do? If I draw back a harvest, it can sustain me for days, weeks, maybe even years. The nourishment of the sea can keep away the hunger pangs — for a time. You can survive on fear and resentment and pride if it's all you have. You'll never feel full, and you'll never be strong, but you'll survive on what the world can offer you — so long as you keep coming back to the shore.

This is where Jesus finds us.

If I close my eyes, I can picture the moments exactly, all of them: my Sea of Galilee moments. I could describe them to you — the day, the year, what was happening in my life, what I wanted and what I needed and what gnawing hunger had brought me, once again, limping, crawling back to the shore.

But you wouldn't understand my Sea of Galilee moments, just like I wouldn't understand yours. There is only one who understands, and his is the voice we heard, clear and strong: "Put down the net, and come with me."

— Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Why do we do that? Catholic Life Explained

Question:

If one's gift or talent is making money, and one uses that money for honorable purposes, is it considered a spiritual gift? What does our faith teach us about wealth and stewardship?

Answer:

Jesus said it best: to whom much is given, much is expected. All gifts come from God, and our abilities are given to us to be used for the benefit of ourselves and of others and at the service of the Gospel. In an article entitled "The Many Faces of Stewardship," Catherine Doherty wrote about stewardship in the "nitty-gritty everydayness of my life," and about the currency or "money" of spiritual stewardship: love, understanding, and unselfishness.

For a gift to have a spiritual benefit, our intention and involvement would be part of the consideration. If I give money to a charity, but do so in order to gain a tax advantage, it could hardly be a virtuous thing on my part. But if I give because I want to help and, in fact, am even willing to get involved, I have committed myself in a deeper, more meaningful way. Regardless of our money-making talents, in the end, true stewardship comes down to how well we practice the virtues of faith, hope, and love within our life and with those in our community and church. Ultimately, the most important element in stewardship is not intangible — it's you!

*On those dwelling in
a land overshadowed
by death
light has arisen.
From that time
on, Jesus began
to preach and say,
“Repent, for the
kingdom of heaven is
at hand.”
- Mt 4:16b-17*

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Questions of the Week

Invite Parishioners to Reflect and Respond to Scripture

First Reading:

Isaiah prophesies a future reversal of fortune for the people living in the land of Zebulun and Naphtali. Have you ever received an unexpected gift or blessing?

Second Reading:

Paul urges the Corinthians to be united in mind and purpose, and to avoid rivalries. How do you react to conflicts at home or at work?

Gospel:

Matthew tells us that Jesus began his public ministry by calling disciples, healing the sick and preaching the Good News of the Kingdom of Heaven. Have you ever felt a “call to action” to live out your faith?



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Prayer

Lord, I want to be a flashlight leading others to you.

Mission for the Week

I will ask my parents how I can help them today.

Sharing the Gospel

Jesus was the light in the darkness that was mentioned in the Scriptures. He told people to repent for the kingdom of heaven is near. Jesus was a good teacher. He explained things so that people understood about God's two greatest commandments. He told stories. Today his word is like a flashlight lighting your path to heaven. If the batteries in your flashlight need recharging, prayer will light up your flashlight again.

Now color the picture! →

Circle the picture that is facing the **wrong** way. Then color in all the pictures.

