

■ 72nd Sharing of the Word

● First Reading: Isaiah 6:1-2, 3-8

In the year of King Uzziah's passing, Isaiah experienced a vision in the temple. When he saw the Lord exalted on His throne with the hem of His robe filling the temple, he was overwhelmed by God's majestic presence and glory. The seraphim (the "burning ones") are humble angels who guard God's glory and holiness, always ready to spring into action to carry out His commands. The thrice-repeated cry "Holy, holy, holy" reveals God's absolute holiness; the title "Lord of Hosts" signifies that God reigns sovereignly over heaven and earth; and "the glory of the Lord" shows that His presence fills the entire universe. The trembling of the threshold's foundation manifests God's glory and majesty, while the rising smoke symbolizes His divine presence.

Confronted with these visions, Isaiah became acutely aware of his own sinfulness. The "uncleanness of the lips" signifies that sin dwells in one's heart and speech, and it is said that anyone who beholds the "Lord of Hosts" cannot live (cf. Exodus 33:20). The burning coal, taken from the altar, represents the purification and forgiveness of sins by God; when the coal touched Isaiah's lips, his sins were forgiven, he was cleansed, and he became an instrument for God's work. In this moment marked by his gratitude for God's forgiveness and his response to the divine call—the process of salvation and calling depicted in the Old Testament (awareness of sin, repentance, forgiveness, and justification by faith) is carried forward into the New Testament (cf. Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:20-25).

【King Uzziah (also called Azariah)】

King Uzziah organized a powerful army, fought victorious battles against neighboring nations, and expanded his territory (2 Chronicles 26:6-15). By improving irrigation systems and agricultural techniques, he enriched the land of Judah (Southern Israel) and spurred economic development. Although he had been an able ruler, in his later years he grew prideful and arrogant, disregarding the counsel of the priests. As a consequence, God punished him with a severe skin disease (leprosy). After his death (around 740 BC), the nation's political, economic, and religious life fell into chaos and decay. This turmoil set the stage for Isaiah and other prophets to arise, calling the people to repentance in the face of God's judgment and prophesying about the Babylonian captivity (which occurred around 586 BC).

● Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Paul reaffirms the gospel that the Corinthian believers had received, emphasizing that steadfast faith is essential for salvation. The core of the gospel, as foretold in Scripture, is that: ① Jesus died for our sins, and ② He was raised on the third day (Psalm 16:10-11; Isaiah 53:6-12).

Cephas (Peter) is mentioned as a witness to Jesus' resurrection. As a central figure in the proclamation of the gospel (Acts 2:14-41), his leadership was trusted by the believers, and the testimony of many witnesses confirmed the reality of the resurrection. James also played an active role as a leader in the early church (around AD 30, when the outpouring of the Holy Spirit began; cf. Acts 15:13-21). Paul (formerly Saul) confessed that he had once persecuted the church, and he acknowledged that his transformation into an apostle and his ability to minister were solely due to God's grace, which he felt compelled to repay. Paul stresses that it is not about who speaks, but rather about the importance of what is believed.

【Regarding Corinth】

At that time, Corinth was flourishing as one of Greece's major commercial cities. However, the Corinthian church, affected by external influences and internal divisions, had become morally corrupt and faced numerous challenges. Paul wrote his letter to address these issues and to expound on the gospel with the aim of fostering growth and unity within the church.

● Gospel Reading: Luke 5:1-11

On the shore of Lake Gennesaret (another name for the Sea of Galilee), crowds gathered eagerly to hear God's teaching. As the fishermen were washing their nets, Jesus approached and requested that they board Simon's boat and go out into deeper water. Simon's immediate compliance was likely due to his reverence for Jesus (cf. Luke 4:38-39), the power of His words, and his humble spirit.

Jesus then sat down in the boat and began teaching them. His message (cf. Luke 4:43) centered on the kingdom of God, repentance, trust and obedience to God, and the grace that enables the fulfillment of what seems impossible. After teaching, Jesus told Simon to go out into the deep and let down his nets. Simon, a professional fisherman, treated this command as an exercise in faith. When he obeyed, a miracle occurred—a great catch of fish.

Overwhelmed by this abundance, Simon recognized both the divinity of Jesus and his own sinfulness. At that moment, as his companions marveled at the miraculous catch, Jesus declared, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men." In response, they left behind their boats their means of livelihood and followed Him.

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