

2ND SUNDAY IN ORD TIME – CYCLE A – JAN 18 2026

Isaiah 49:3, 5–6; 1 Corinthians 1:1–3; John 1:29–34

Today's readings come together around one powerful theme: **we are called, chosen, and sent by God to reveal His light to the world.**

In the **first reading from Isaiah**, God speaks to His servant and says, *"You are my servant, Israel, through whom I show my glory."* The servant is called even before birth, formed in the womb, for a mission. This tells us that God's call is not accidental. Each of us has a purpose in God's plan. God then says something even more striking: *"I will make you a light to the nations."* God's salvation is not meant for a few, but for all. His love reaches every corner of the world. So, our birth is a call for a specific purpose and the specific purpose has a mission to be fulfilled.

When we recognize God's call, our lives become a blessing to others. That's why Saint Paul in the second reading, reminds us that we are *called to be holy*. Holiness is not reserved for a select group; it is the vocation of every baptized person.

Holiness isn't something you "earn" once you become perfect. Holiness is a **calling** you receive the moment you are baptized. Many of us feel "unholy" because of our mistakes or anxieties. But Paul reminds us: you are "set apart." You belong to God. This is not your achievement; it is God's gift in Christ. The Spirit that *remained* on Jesus now dwells in you. **You are called to be holy:** This is your vocation. It's a call not to a private club of piety, but to a mission.

The **Gospel from John** brings us to the figure of **John the Baptist**, who clearly understands his mission. Seeing Jesus, he declares, *"Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."* John does not draw attention to himself. He points away from himself to Christ. This is true witness. John recognizes Jesus as the One sent by God, the One on whom the Spirit rests.

John the Baptist teaches us humility and clarity of purpose. He knows who he is—and who he is not. He is not the light; he is the one who points to the light. His joy is fulfilled in revealing Christ.

He calls Jesus the "Lamb." This isn't a title of worldly power; it's a title of sacrifice and gentleness. John knows that the world isn't saved by lions who crush, but by the Lamb who carries our burdens. Twice, John says, *"I did not know him."* Even the greatest prophet had to have a "discovery" moment. He had to let the Holy Spirit reveal the truth to him.

Jesus' mission is universal—*the world*. He is the personal fulfillment of Isaiah's "light to the nations." John gives us something even more intimate. He says, "I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from heaven and remain on him." This is not just a prophet with a message; this is the *Anointed One*, the Messiah, filled permanently with the very life and love of God. He is the source of the light.

John's entire life is like a pointing finger. He doesn't say, "Look at me and how well I baptize." He says, "Look at Him. He is the one you've been waiting for." Which means, in our humility like John, we are called to let the light of Christ shine through our ordinary lives: in our forgiveness instead of grudges, our integrity at work, our kindness to the difficult neighbor, our defense of the vulnerable, our hope in the face of despair. This is how salvation reaches "the ends of the earth"—through us.

Together, these readings remind us that **we are called before we are sent**, and **we are sent to bear Christ to others**. Like the servant in Isaiah, like Paul, like John the Baptist, we are invited to be instruments of God's light. God's plan of salvation is never meant to be small, private, or exclusive. It begins with a specific person, a chosen people, but its purpose is cosmic—to be a light of hope, truth, and healing for *all humanity*. This is the grand, divine vision.

May we recognize our calling, live in holiness, and boldly point others to Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

=====