

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

January 18, 2026

You are my servant.

Called to be an Apostle.

Behold, Lamb of God.

-rvb.

No man has ever spoken as this man, “The great titles, the I Am’s of Jesus.”

I AM the Door, Bread of Life, from Above, the Light of the World, the Good Shepherd, the Way, the Truth, the Life, the Resurrection, the True Vine, the Alpha and the Omega, a King, the Son of Man. These two words ‘I AM’ mean the divine, eternal being of Jesus. They express equality with God. Jesus identifies Himself with the eternal, timeless, and changeless God.

Today’s Gospel is reflective of a poem entitled, A Norman Crucifix, written in 1632 by Charles Causley. In the Gospel John has difficulty recognizing the Christ as he says, “John testified further, saying, “I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from heaven and remain upon him.

I did not know him.” However,

“I am the great sun, but you do not see me.

I am your husband, but you turn away.

I am the captive, but you do not free me.

I am the truth, but you will not believe me.

I am the city where you will not stay.

I am your wife, but you will leave me.

I am the God to whom you will not pray.

I am your counsel, but you do not hear me.

I am the lover whom you betray.

I am the actor, but you do not cheer me.

I am the holy dove whom you will slay.

I am your life, but if you will not name me.

Seal up your soul with tears and never blame me.”

“It is in Jesus that we live, move, and have our being.” Acts 17:28.

Roger J. Vanden Busch

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Reading 1

Isaiah 49:3, 5-6

The LORD said to me: You are my servant,

Israel, through whom I show my glory.

Now the LORD has spoken

who formed me as his servant from the womb,

that Jacob may be brought back to him

and Israel gathered to him;

and I am made glorious in the sight of the LORD,

and my God is now my strength!

It is too little, the LORD says, for you to be my servant,

to raise up the tribes of Jacob,
and restore the survivors of Israel;
I will make you a light to the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.

A reflection, exegesis, and commentary on the scriptures.

In this reading from Isaiah, he composes his poetry in the form of the second “servant song.” In the first three verses the servant is conscious of his mission and ministry of being called from birth, symbolic of the action of God, to reveal the glory of God. In verse four, Isaiah emphasizes triumph through failure. One’s labor is not in vain despite the servant’s confession of failure. Verses 5 and 6 accent the second stage in the vocation of the servant, and his quickened faith in God. The servant is Israel, the saintly ones, through whom the light will shine for the Gentiles. Israel’s kings are to extend and encourage the calling and mission of the servant to the ends of the earth.

God says, “I will make you light to the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.”

We are lights, we who live with Christ not only have light but also become a light for others. Jesus said, “I am the light of the world,” also said “You are

the light of the world.” It is not our light. It is Christ’s light that is reflected in our lives as the moon reflects the sun. Thus, it is true that the light of God shines in: 1. The Savior: “I am the light of the world.” -John 8:12. 2. The Scriptures: “Your word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light for my path.” - Psalm 119:105; and 3. We, the community of saints, “You are the light of the world.” -Matthew 5:14. During an air raid drill in WWII an entire city was completely blacked out. There was not a light to be seen. Suddenly, a youngster said to the mother, “Look, mom, the lightning bugs have not put out their lights. What about them?” Replied the mother, “They are God’s creatures and their lights cannot be extinguished.”

We live in a world where raids, arrests, fear, abuse, murder, hatred, lies, and overall darkness invade our Constitutional rights like cancer. In response, almost daily throughout the United States, we gather to pray, to protest, and to protect innocent ones arrested without due process of the law; and in peaceful rallies we strive to reflect Christ’s light of love, peace, justice, and freedom for every single human being which St. John calls the “light of life.” Sadly, despite our efforts, the light of individuals like Renee Nicole Good , mother of three children, was snuffed out in an instant. “The shooting—captured on video from multiple angles—sparked immediate

tensions in the city and a political firestorm over ICE enforcement tactics.

We are becoming a police state. Good left behind three children: a daughter and a son, ages 15 and 12, from her first marriage, and a six-year-old son from her second marriage, which ended with her husband's death."

-Internet.

In the Eastern Orthodox Church, Christians light a candle every time they come to church. They seek to remind themselves that Jesus is the light of the world, and it is incumbent upon His followers to reflect this light in their daily lives.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 40:2, 4, 7-8, 8-9, 10

R/ (8a and 9a) Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will.

I have waited, waited for the LORD,
and he stooped toward me and heard my cry.
And he put a new song into my mouth,
a hymn to our God.

R/ Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will.

Sacrifice or offering you wished not,
but ears open to obedience you gave me.
Holocausts or sin-offerings you sought not;
then said I, "Behold I come."

R/ Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will.

"In the written scroll it is prescribed for me,
to do your will, O my God, is my delight,
and your law is within my heart!"

R/ Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will.

I announced your justice in the vast assembly;

I did not restrain my lips, as you, O LORD, know.

R/ Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will.

Reading 2

1 Corinthians 1:1-3

**Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,
and Sosthenes our brother,
to the church of God that is in Corinth,
to you who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be holy,
with all those everywhere who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord
and ours.**

Grace to you and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ

A reflection, exegesis, and commentary on the scriptures.

In this reading from Corinthians, the Workbook for Readers sets the tone and context: “1 Corinthians, which will continue through the Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time this year is addressed to a very gifted group of Christians at Corinth; the letter aims to foster their unity by highlighting their common bond in Christ and with Christians everywhere.” P. 50. Paul has his work cut out for him and Sosthenes given that Corinth is a community divided by factions which threaten the unity of the community of believers. In verses 2-9, Paul proposes the two-fold profile of the community: 1. It is sanctified in Jesus Christ, and 2. We are called into union with Jesus. There is no mention of faith, hope, and love in these verses since there is certainly room for spiritual

awareness, development, commitment, and action – “faith without deeds is dead.” Paul is contrasting the unity of the Christian community with the divisions among them. They have turned away from God by severing their bond of Eucharistic wholeness and holiness. Paul is conscious of wishing the community grace and peace to guide the community to settle such problems as: 1. Partisan spirit (1:10-11); 2. Issues of intellectual pride (1:17, 20-25); and 3. Problems of immorality (chapter 5) to name a few of them causing its dysfunctionality.

“Paul is called to be an apostle/ **disciple** –

and Sosthenes our brother,

to the church of God that is in Corinth.”

Let us finger through the letters of the word DI SC IP LE SH IP =
you and I are:

DI= **D**rawn **I**n by Jesus;

SC = we are called to **S**erve the **C**ommunity;

IP = we are **I**nvited to nourish our lives by **P**rayer;

LE = we are to **L**ay down our lives for others and to be **E**mpowered by the Holy Spirit;

SH = we are to **S**hare in the **H**urts of others;

IP = we are **I**nvited to **P**roclaim the good news to the ends of the earth.

You and I are invited, like Paul and Sosthenes, to proclaim the good news.

Once upon a time a missionary was lost at sea. By chance he was washed upon the shores of a remote island. He was weak and near death from exposure to the elements. Gradually, the people of the island nursed him back to health. While the missionary lived among the people, he never preached, spoke of the bible, prayed, or sang religious songs. However, when the people of the island were ill, he visited them and nursed them back to health. He befriended them. Years later other missionaries came to this remote island to preach about Jesus Christ. The island people listened intently to their message. After the missionaries finished their presentation, the people told them about Jesus who had already come to live among them.

Acts 2.42-47 describes how the early Christian community lived, worshipped, and celebrated the risen Christ in their midst. Acts mirror the early Christian community as it glowed like a beacon for all to see and experience. We are challenged to ponder, accept, and live the challenge of Jesus' call to discipleship. However, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, in his Letters and Papers From Prison said: "It is no easy task to be a

disciple: reconciliation, redemption, regeneration, and the Holy Spirit, love of our enemies, cross and resurrection, life in Christ and Christian discipleship – all these things are so difficult and so remote that we hardly venture any more to speak of them. In the traditional words and acts we suspect that there may be something quite new and revolutionary, though we cannot yet grasp or express it. That is our fault.”

In conclusion, using the ancient Greeks' division of the world into five elements: earth, air, water, fire, and light, consider the call to discipleship to be like the earth – nurturing roots and enhancing growth; like the air – animating and giving life; like the water – supporting, affirming and keeping others afloat; like fire – sparking inspiring and enkindling; and like light – showing the way, illuminating and revealing the kingdom of God.

You and I are called to discipleship. Well?

Alleluia

John 1:14a, 12a

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

The Word of God became flesh and dwelt among us.
To those who accepted him,

he gave power to become children of God.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

John 1:29-34

John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him and said,

“Behold, the **Lamb of God**, who takes away the sin of the world.

He is the one of whom I said,

‘A man is coming after me who ranks ahead of me
because he existed before me.’

I did not know him,

but the reason why I came baptizing with water
was that he might be made known to Israel.”

John testified further, saying,

“I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from heaven
and remain upon him.

I did not know him,

but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me,
‘On whomever you see the Spirit come down and remain,
he is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’

Now I have seen and testified that he is the **Son of God.”**

A reflection, exegesis, and commentary on the scriptures.

The Gospel of John offers a series of theological titles for Jesus indicative of the community as it spiritually evolves to deepen its faith in the Risen Christ. Jesus is portrayed as the “Lamb of God,” the one who wipes out God’s adversaries. Jesus is the one who communicates the Holy Spirit to everyone. Jesus is also identified as “God’s Chosen One” meaning the Son

of God. In Genesis we are made in the image and likeness of God. In John, chapter 1, God is made in the image of us – Word made flesh. May no one mistake us for anything but Christmas Christians illuminated by the star of the Epiphany shining in and through us.

Final prayer: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” – 1 Peter 2:9.

Blessings of Health, Happiness, and Holiness upon you and your loved ones -Roger J. Vanden Busch.