

4th SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME – January 28, 2018

For he is our God, and we are the people he shepherds, the flock he guides.

Through our Baptism, we became messenger of God. Part of our mission is to spread the great news of God's love for all people. This can be done through our words, but often, we preach through our actions and show of concern for others.

There are times when we cannot answer a question we are asked and seek help from some reliable people. We know there are many people ready to help us but can we rely on their expertise?

We search for someone who we can believe, who has a good reputation among people, who judges with knowledge and authority. The supreme authority in wisdom is God. He sends his messengers to give answers to our questions.

The first reading informs us about God's promise to send his prophet who would come not from above but from among us. "Your God will raise up for you a prophet like myself, from your own brothers; to him you must listen."

From this passage we learn how to recognize the true prophet, his authority and responsibility before God and us. We should cooperate with God's grace. Look not only to the prophet for examples, but to your parents, teachers and friends.

The second reading teaches us to not only listen to God's word but to respond to God's call while pursuing our vocation.

In today's Gospel, Jesus sees several fisherman who are washing and repairing their nets. Jesus calls to four of them, Andrew, Simon, James and John, inviting them to come with Him "and He taught them with authority."

His call is taken seriously, to leave their jobs, their homes, their lives, and remarkably, they do. They abandon their nets and follow Jesus.

Since we have Jesus' teaching and the teaching of the prophets sent to us, we should show respect to God for the Bible and respect toward the Church authorities. When we take the Bible to read it, we should read it just as the priest and the deacon do in church, with reverence and devotion, bowing our heads and kissing the holy book. We do so because it is God who speaks to us, who come to us, who preaches to us.

What about parental authority in families? Our parents were called by God to be married to each other and were given authority by God to have and raise children. Do you remember these questions, "Do you love each other? Do you promise to raise your children according to God's law?" God and his Church bestow grace upon parents to act on their behalf. Do we see and respect our parents as God's representatives?

So let us go forward to the Eucharist in faith and sing joyfully to the Lord, as our psalmist says, *com[ing] into his presence with thanksgiving... For he is our God, and we are the people he shepherds, the flock he guides.*