



ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

"Our mission is to bring the good news of Jesus Christ's love to our entire community through traditional Anglo-Catholic worship, fellowship, outreach, and Christian formation."

Our Vision: *"We strive to be a haven of healing, reconciliation, joy and peace in service to our wider community and beyond, so that our example in prayer and practice may reflect Christ's love for us all."*

THIS SUNDAY June 21 & BEYOND

Unpopular Witnesses

What the prophet Jeremiah was appointed by God to tell his people was not well received. But history proved him truthful in the end. He was the prophet that announced the Babylonian captivity to the people of Judea. Perhaps if those in power had listened to him, they would have saved themselves and a great part of the people a lot of suffering. But they did not. They insisted on looking for foreign alliances that would not work out well. And they put God's true prophet in prison while they listened to fake ones.



It is not hard to imagine how this prophet must have suffered. On the one hand, he felt the irresistible impulse to tell the truth, to be a real witness to God's true Word. On the other, he felt that his truthfulness and loyalty to God only brought him misery, derision and contempt. But true witnesses must choose the hard way, no matter what the cost is.

If Jesus enjoyed a certain measure of popularity among the common people—something He never really intended—due to His healing, feeding, and life-restoring acts, this popularity was certainly overstepped by the deep hatred he gained among the ruling classes of His time. So much so that they finally condemned Him to death through a totally unfair trial.

Jesus was aware of this likely outcome, and He was also aware that His true followers would face the same trials. So, He prepares His disciples for what is to come. He warns them about the high cost of being true witnesses. He foresees that some of them can

even die as a result of following the Way of Love, but He assures them of God's constant presence among the true disciples, the true witnesses, and their unfailing value and acknowledgement by God.

Jesus' times are very much like our times in the sense that His message is almost as unpopular today as it was then. There was a long period of time in history when Christianity became the generally accepted 'norm' for a great part of the world. But that time is gone. We may feel nostalgia for it, but to be honest, accepting an established norm because it is socially advantageous does not say much about the integrity of the followers of that norm. It does not mean there could be no true witnesses among those followers. There certainly were. But it is when something becomes unpopular that it takes real courage and integrity to be a part of it.

The Christian Church today still has some influence in some parts of the world. It is still accepted and respected in most countries, but there are places where it has been openly persecuted and rejected. But even where it is not dangerous to be a Christian, we can no longer expect to be heard and followed just because we are part of the Church. Our message will be questioned by many. It will even be scorned and despised by some.

Amid so many conflicts, when our voices are not one with God's authentic voice, we become totally useless as witnesses, even if we gain some popularity among the ruling classes of our time. We should not confuse compliance with the popular voices of the day with true evangelism. That does not mean we should advocate for violence and revolts either. The Apostle Paul was noticeably clear on that point. We need to ask the Holy Spirit for discernment, for what God's authentic message should be for the times we are living. And then we should not be concerned about being unpopular. Our only concern should be to be true to God's message, to be His loyal witnesses, the Jeremiahs of our time.

Fr. Carlos E. Expósito, Rector

Readings for this Sunday – The Third Sunday after Pentecost

Jeremiah 20:7-13 Psalm 69:7-10, 16-18 Romans 5:15b-19 Matthew 10:24-33

CALENDAR

SUNDAY: The Third Sunday after Pentecost

8:00am Low Mass (Church)

10:30am Solemn Mass (Church)

TUESDAY Noon Service

Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at www.allsaintschurch.org

FRIDAY Christian Formation Study at noon

Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at www.allsaintschurch.org

SUNDAY The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

8:00am Low Mass (Church)

10:30am Solemn Mass (Church)