

January 5 Thursday

Memorial of Saint John Neumann, Bishop

Reading 11 JN 3:11-21

Beloved: This is the message you have heard from the beginning: we should love one another, unlike Cain who belonged to the Evil One and slaughtered his brother. Why did he slaughter him? Because his own works were evil, and those of his brother righteous. Do not be amazed, then, brothers and sisters, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life because we love our brothers. Whoever does not love remains in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life remaining in him. The way we came to know love was that he laid down his life for us; so we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If someone who has worldly means sees a brother in need and refuses him compassion, how can the love of God remain in him? Children, let us love not in word or speech but indeed and truth. Now this is how we shall know that we belong to the truth and reassure our hearts before him in whatever our hearts condemn, for God is greater than our hearts and knows everything. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence in God.

Responsorial Psalm PS 100:1B-2, 3, 4, 5

R. (2a) **Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.**

Sing joyfully to the LORD, all you lands;
serve the LORD with gladness;
come before him with joyful song.

R. **Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.**

Know that the LORD is God;
he made us, his we are;
his people, the flock he tends.

R. **Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.**

Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
his courts with praise;
Give thanks to him; bless his name.

R. **Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.**

The LORD is good:
the LORD, whose kindness endures forever,
and his faithfulness, to all generations.

R. **Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.**

Alleluia

R. **Alleluia, alleluia.**

A holy day has dawned upon us.
Come, you nations, and adore the Lord.
Today a great light has come upon the earth.

R. **Alleluia, alleluia.**

Gospel JN 1:43-51

Jesus decided to go to Galilee, and he found Philip. And Jesus said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the town of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one about whom Moses wrote in the law, and also the prophets, Jesus, son of Joseph, from Nazareth." But Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, "Here is a true child of Israel. There is no duplicity in him." Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, I saw you under the fig tree." Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel." Jesus answered and said to him, "Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than this." And he said to him, "Amen, amen, I say to you, you will see the sky opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

Reflection:

Today people question everything and everybody: institution, religious norms, moral precepts, cultural traditions and religious beliefs. A culture of challenge and suspicions has taken over. In today's gospel we see that Nathaniel was obsessed with the blemishes of the people of Nazareth. He logically concluded that Jesus could not be different from any other Nazarene. In a catechism class when asked what Nathaniel would have done under fig tree, the boys responded that he would have answered nature's call. Jesus saw him under the fig tree. With that short knowing Jesus could say "here is a true child of Israel. There is no duplicity in him." This positive attitude of Jesus won the skeptical Nathaniel as a disciple. Jesus, like a teacher, was counting the good qualities of Nathaniel. Shall we play the role of the teacher and share the positives with those we meet?