

Sunday 25 January – Conversion of St. Paul

Collect

Almighty God,
who caused the light of the gospel
to shine throughout the world
through the preaching of your servant Saint Paul:
grant that we who celebrate his wonderful conversion
may follow him in bearing witness to your truth;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

First Reading: Jeremiah 1:4-10

⁴Now the word of the LORD came to me saying,
⁵‘Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
and before you were born I consecrated you;
I appointed you a prophet to the nations.’

⁶Then I said, ‘Ah, Lord GOD! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy.’ ⁷But the LORD said to me,
‘Do not say, “I am only a boy”;
for you shall go to all to whom I send you,
and you shall speak whatever I command you.

⁸Do not be afraid of them,
for I am with you to deliver you, says the LORD.’

⁹Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the LORD said to me,
‘Now I have put my words in your mouth.
¹⁰See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms.’

Psalm 67

God be gracious to us and bless us ♦
and make his face to shine upon us,
That your way may be known upon earth, ♦
your saving power among all nations.

*Let the peoples praise you, O God;♦
let all the peoples praise you.*

O let the nations rejoice and be glad, ♦
for you will judge the peoples righteously
and govern the nations upon earth.

*Let the peoples praise you, O God;♦
let all the peoples praise you.*

Then shall the earth bring forth her increase, ♦
and God, our own God, will bless us.

God will bless us, ♦
and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

Second Reading: Acts 9:1-22

¹Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ²and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. ³Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?’ ⁵He asked, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ The reply came, ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ⁶But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.’ ⁷The men who were travelling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. ⁸Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. ⁹For three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

¹⁰Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, ‘Ananias.’ He answered, ‘Here I am, Lord.’ ¹¹The Lord said to him, ‘Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying, ¹²and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight.’ ¹³But Ananias answered, ‘Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem; ¹⁴and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name.’ ¹⁵But the Lord said to him, ‘Go,

for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel;¹⁶ I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.’¹⁷ So Ananias went and entered the house. He laid his hands on Saul and said, ‘Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.’¹⁸ And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized,¹⁹ and after taking some food, he regained his strength. For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus,²⁰ and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, ‘He is the Son of God.’²¹ All who heard him were amazed and said, ‘Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem among those who invoked this name? And has he not come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief priests?’²² Saul became increasingly more powerful and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Messiah.

Gospel: Matthew 19:27-end

²⁷ Peter said to Jesus: ‘Look, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?’²⁸ Jesus said to them, ‘Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man is seated on the throne of his glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.²⁹ And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields, for my name’s sake, will receive a hundredfold, and will inherit eternal life.³⁰ But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.’