

## **Commentary on the Gospel for Sun, Jan 21st 2018**

In the first reading from the book of Jonah, God called Jonah and sent him to Nineveh to announce repentance and faith in God or they would all be destroyed. Jonah did as God said and within a day, the whole city repented, “believed God; they proclaimed a fast and all of them, great and small, put on sackcloth.” V. 5 According to the text, God changes his mind and does not destroy the city or its inhabitants. In the gospel reading Jesus himself is the message, God with us, and the messenger. He announces that the kingdom of God is at hand and he urges us to repent and believe in the good news that his is bringing (cf. v. 15).

It strikes me that these are only two examples among many throughout Scripture where God invites us to repent and change our ways. God invites us towards Godself and the Life that only God can give. This invitation seems to be always open, God is faithful; and at the same time it seems to be continually coming to us and inviting a response from us.

In the passage from the gospel according to Mark, we see how Jesus invites his first disciples. Very often when reading commentaries or hearing preaching about this passage we are invited to reflect upon and contemplate our own calling to follow Jesus and to announce the kingdom of God.

Today, I would like to invite us to reflect on God’s faithfulness to us in his unconditional love that keeps constantly, but gently inviting us towards Godself, the only requirement: “repent, believe and embrace this good news of my unconditional love for you.”

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