

**READINGS AND REFLECTION  
FOR THE 12<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

(from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops  
<http://usccb.org/bible/readings/062120.cfm>)

**FIRST READING - FROM THE PROPHET JEREMIAH 20: 10 - 13**

Jeremiah said:

“I hear the whisperings of many:

‘Terror on every side! Denounce! let us denounce him!’

All those who were my friends are on the watch for any misstep of mine.

‘Perhaps he will be trapped; then we can prevail,  
and take our vengeance on him.’

But the LORD is with me, like a mighty champion:  
my persecutors will stumble, they will not triumph.  
In their failure, they will be put to utter shame,  
to lasting, unforgettable confusion.

O LORD of hosts, you who test the just, who probe mind and heart,  
let me witness the vengeance you take on them,  
for to you I have entrusted my cause.

Sing to the LORD, praise the LORD,  
for he has rescued the life of the poor  
from the power of the wicked!”

The Word of the Lord.

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 69:8-10, 14, 17, 33-35**

**RESPONSE: Lord, in your great love, answer me.**

For your sake I bear insult and shame covers my face.  
I have become an outcast to my brothers, a stranger to my children,  
because zeal for your house consumes me  
and the insults of those who blaspheme you fall upon me.  
**R. Lord, in your great love, answer me.**

I pray to you, O LORD, for the time of your favour, O God!  
In your great kindness answer me with your constant help.  
Answer me, O LORD, for bounteous is your kindness;  
in your great mercy, turn towards me.  
**R. Lord, in your great love, answer me.**

“See, you lowly ones, and be glad; you who seek God, may your hearts revive!  
For the LORD hears the poor, and his own who are in bonds, he spurns not.  
Let the heavens and the earth praise him,  
the seas and whatever moves in them!”  
**R. Lord, in your great love, answer me.**

### **A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER OF ST PAUL TO THE ROMANS 5: 12 – 15**

Brothers and sisters:

Through one man, sin entered the world  
and through sin, death,  
and thus death came to all men, inasmuch as all sinned—  
for up to the time of the law, sin was in the world,  
though sin is not accounted when there is no law.

But death reigned from Adam to Moses,  
even over those who did not sin  
after the pattern of the trespass of Adam,  
who is the type of the one who was to come.

But the gift is not like the transgression.  
For if by the transgression of the one, the many died,  
how much more did the grace of God  
and the gracious gift of the one man Jesus Christ  
overflow for the many.

The Word of the Lord.

The Spirit of truth will testify to me, says the Lord;  
and you also will testify.

*Jn 15: 26, 27*

## A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 10: 26 – 33

Jesus said to the Twelve:

“Fear no one.

Nothing is concealed that will not be revealed;

no secret will not be known.

What I say to you in the darkness, speak in the light;

what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops.

Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul;

rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy

both soul and body in Gehenna.

Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin?

Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father’s knowledge.

Even all the hairs of your head are counted, so do not be afraid.

You are worth more than many sparrows.

Everyone who acknowledges me before others,

I will acknowledge before my heavenly Father.

But whoever denies me before others,

I will deny before my heavenly Father.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

### REFLECTION

“Fear no one” is a command Jesus gives to all his disciples in every age. We can be confident in Jesus’ teaching that everyone is important and we need courageous people who will live and teach the wisdom of God. That can be costly for them.

Jeremiah suffered insufferable pain from others’ responses to warnings God called him to deliver to them. He struggled in the face of threats but came to trust God believing that in the end, his enemies would not prevail.

Jesus prepared his disciples for the divisiveness and rejection they will experience when they proclaim to the world what they will have learnt through their intimate communion with Him. The Spirit of God will be with them.

Sometimes, in response to our faith in God, we need to go against the tide or out of our comfort zone to defend, help or respond to people at risk or some principle at stake. A tale may help us think about how we are connected and could respond. If I was the chicken, the pig or the cow in this story, what kind of a response – even if costly – could I make to the mice’s plight?

As well, how could the mouse, the farming couple or the snake have changed the development or outcome of the story by responses they could have made?

A mouse looked through the crack in the wall to see the farmer and his wife open a package. The mouse wondered, “What food might this contain?”

He was devastated to discover it was a mousetrap.

Scampering to the farmyard, the mouse proclaimed the warning,

“There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!”

The chicken clucked and scratched, raised her head and said,

"Mr Mouse, I can tell this is a grave concern to you,  
but it is of no consequence to me. I cannot be bothered by it!"

The mouse turned to the pig and told him,

"There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The pig sympathized, but said, I am so very sorry, Mr Mouse, but there is nothing I can do about it but pray. Be assured you are in my prayers."

The mouse turned to the cow and said,

"There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The cow said, "Wow, Mr Mouse. I'm sorry for you, but it's no skin off my nose."

So, the mouse returned to the house, dejected, to face the mousetrap... alone.

That night a snap broke the silence! Had the mousetrap caught its prey?

The farmer's wife rushed to see what was caught. In the darkness, she did not see the venomous snake with its tail trapped! The snake bit the wife.

The farmer rushed her to the hospital and she returned home with a fever.

Knowing fresh chicken soup relieves fevers, the farmer took his hatchet to the farmyard for the soup's main ingredient.

Sadly his wife's sickness continued, so friends and neighbours came to sit with her around the clock. To sustain them, the farmer butchered the pig.

The farmer's wife did not get well; tragically, she died. Many people came for her funeral. The farmer slaughtered the cow to feed all the mourners.

The mouse looked upon it all from his crack in the wall with great sadness.....

We are all different, important and called to live Jesus’ mission wherever we are. May the Holy Spirit guide and empower us for our listening, choices and actions.