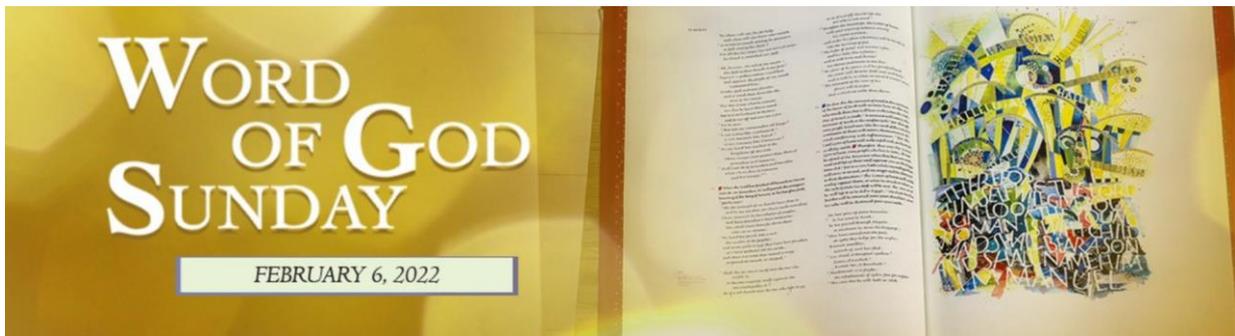


## OUR MISSION TO BE PROPHETS OF GOD'S WORD

~ WORD OF GOD SUNDAY ~

5<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – 6 FEBRUARY 2022



### THE WORD OF GOD SUNDAY

Today on this Fifth Sunday of Ordinary time in Australia we celebrate The *Word of God Sunday*. Many parts of the world celebrate it on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time.

We reflect on today's Gospel, and then we turn to read from the recent [homily of Pope Francis on the Word of God](#).

At the end of the homily are links to *four* Safeguarding documents to read as we strive as a whole community to keep children and vulnerable adults safe.

### GOSPEL OF LUKE 5:1-11

We notice in today's Gospel, several stages of preaching the Word of God.

#### ❖ Part One: Jesus proclaimed the Word

We picture Jesus preaching the Word of God by the lake.

The crowd were gathered around him, listening and trying to get closer to him.

They wanted to hear what Jesus was saying.

The Gospel tells us that

*'the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God'*

*Do we show such eagerness to hear God?*

#### ❖ Part Two: Jesus involved others to help him in simple ways

Jesus noticed a vacant boat

*"He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore.*

*Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat."*

Jesus seeks out ways for us to hear the Word of God.

#### ❖ Part Three: Jesus invites us to understand how his Word relates to our daily life

Listening to God's Word encourages us to be active in sharing the Good News of Jesus.

We hear

*'When he had finished speaking,*

*he said to Simon, 'Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.'*

Jesus showed them the Word of God in action as they followed the words of Jesus and hauled in a large catch.

❖ Part Four: *Jesus invites us on a journey of faith*

Jesus invited Simon,

*'Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.'*

This invitation is to each of us.

❖ Part Five: *We accept the invitation of Jesus, and are guided by the Word of God*

We hear the response of Simon and his partners.

*'When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.'*

## POPE FRANCIS TEACHES US ABOUT THE WORD OF GOD

Two weeks ago on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, Pope Francis in his homily, shared insights into the Word of God in our daily lives.

### FULFILLED

In the synagogue, after Jesus read from the Prophet Isaiah to describe his mission, he announced, *"Today this scripture has been fulfilled"* (Luke's Gospel 4:21).

Pope Francis reflected on this fulfillment as he said:

*"Fulfilled: the word of God is no longer a promise, but is now fulfilled. In Jesus, it has taken flesh. By the power of the Holy Spirit, it has come to dwell among us and it desires to continue to dwell in our midst, in order to fulfil our expectations and to heal our wounds. ...Jesus reveals the face of God as one who cares for our poverty and takes to heart our destiny. ...He is God-with-us, passionately concerned about our lives and engaged in them, even sharing our tears... counsels us, defends us, sustains us and partakes of our pain. He is always present."*

### CLOSENESS, HOPE AND JOY

God is close to us, seeking to care for us and support us.

*"...God is close at hand, and he wants to care for me and for you, for everyone. ...A God of closeness, of compassionate and tender closeness. He wants to relieve the burdens that crush you, to warm your wintry coldness, to brighten your daily dreariness and to support your faltering steps. This he does by his word, by the word he speaks to rekindle hope amid the ashes of your fears, to help you rediscover joy in the labyrinths of your sorrows, to fill with hope your feelings of solitude. He makes you move forward, not in a labyrinth, but on a daily journey to find him."*

### **WE START WITH THE WORD OF GOD THAT LIBERATES**

Pope Francis tells us that we begin with the Word of God.

*“...In order to convert us to the true God,  
Jesus shows us where to start: from his word.  
That word, by telling us the story of God’s love for us,  
liberates us from the fears and preconceptions  
about him that stifle the joy of faith.  
That word overthrows false idols, unmask our projections,  
destroys our all too human images of God  
and brings us back to see his true face, his mercy. “  
“The word of God nurtures and renews faith”  
“The word that draws us close to God.”*

### **ENCOUNTER THE WOUNDS OF PEOPLE**

Our mission is not only to pray for people, but also to be near their wounds.

*‘... For sacred scripture has not been given to us for our entertainment,  
to coddle us with an angelic spirituality, but to make us go forth and  
encounter others, drawing near to their wounds. ‘*

### **CALLED TO BE ACTIVE**

Pope Francis uses the verbs “plunges” and “challenges” to stress that the Word of God calls us to be active.

*‘...His word does not remove us from life, but plunges us into life,  
into everyday life, into listening to the sufferings of others  
and the cry of the poor,  
into the violence and injustice that wound society and our world.  
It challenges us, as Christians, not to be indifferent,  
but active, creative Christians, prophetic Christians.’*

### **A LISTENING AND ACTIVE CHURCH**

Pope Francis asks for **the Church** to listen and to be involved.

*‘A Church inclined to listen to others, engaged in reaching out  
to raise up our brothers and sisters from all that oppresses them,  
to undo the knots of fear, to liberate those most vulnerable  
from the prisons of poverty, from interior ennui and the sadness that stifles  
life?  
Isn’t that what we want?’*

### **PROPHETS OF GOD’S WORD**

Pope invites each one of us, through our mission,  
to be prophets of the Word of God.

*‘...the mission of each one of us: to be credible messengers,  
prophets of God’s word in the world.  
Consequently, let us grow passionate about sacred scripture,  
let us be willing to dig deep within the word  
that reveals God’s newness and leads us tirelessly to love others.’*

May we plunge into life as we respond daily to God's Word.  
May we recognise the invitation from God to be prophets of God's Word.

Let us pray.

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### SAFEGUARDING

All are invited to read the **four** Safeguarding documents provided on the links below, as we strive, as a whole community, to keep children and vulnerable adults safe.  
Thank you.

1. [Archdiocesan Safeguarding Policy](#),
2. [the Safeguarding Commitment Statement](#)
3. [the STOpline service information](#)
4. [and the Safe Practice Guide for the National Protocol for Responding to Child Abuse Concerns and Allegations](#)

Father Gerry

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/020622.cfm>

