

## First Reading

Reader: Susan De Guide rsm

A Reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah:

(55:1-11)

All you who are thirsty, come to the water!  
You who have no money, come, buy grain and eat;  
Come, buy grain without money, wine and milk without cost!  
Why spend your money for what is not bread;  
your wages for what does not satisfy?  
Only listen to me, and you shall eat well, you shall delight in rich fare.  
Pay attention and come to me; listen, that you may have life.  
I will make with you an everlasting covenant,  
the steadfast loyalty promised to David.  
As I made him a witness to peoples, a leader and commander of peoples,  
So shall you summon a nation you knew not,  
and a nation that knew you not shall run to you,  
Because of the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, who has glorified you.

Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near.  
Let the wicked forsake their way, and sinners their thoughts;  
Let them turn to the LORD to find mercy;  
to our God, who is generous in forgiving.  
For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways,  
says the LORD.  
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so are my ways higher than your ways,  
my thoughts higher than your thoughts.

Yet just as from the heavens the rain and snow come down  
And do not return there till they have watered the earth,  
making it fertile and fruitful,  
Giving seed to the one who sows and bread to the one who eats,  
So shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth;  
It shall not return to me empty, but shall do what pleases me,  
Achieving the end for which I sent it.

The Word of the Lord.

**Second Reading**  
Reader: Michelle Teahan

**An extract from a letter of Mary Ann Doyle to Mary Clare Augustine Moore, 1844:**

We had much consolation in the support and kindness which the Revd. gentlemen of St. Teresa's Church always evinced for the establishment, particularly the Very Revd. Redmond O'Hanlon.

The House was still getting on wonderfully—  
school, House of Mercy, and the poor sick all well attended to,  
sisters increasing.

It was then considered things could not be permanently settled  
unless some served a regular noviciate.

The obstacles to Revd. Mother's becoming a religious were now removed.  
Application was made to Rome for permission to serve a Noviceship in an enclosed  
order, which was granted and thought to be a great favour.

We had then 12 sisters.

Application was made to George's Hill. They kindly consented to receive us.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of September 1830 we left Baggot St.

The Sister chosen to come with [us] was a saintly creature.

Revd. Mother went through her noviciate in a most edifying manner;  
her cheerfulness was the admiration of all,  
tho' she had much care on her mind, still directing Baggot St.,  
and suffered much from a disease of the gums during the time.

For some time she was treated with indulgence and respect,  
but a change of Superiors taking place,  
she was put under a young and very strict Mistress of Novices.

She then went through every humble duty with pleasure,  
assisted me in the sacristy, swept, served in refectory,  
and every other humble office.

Our Noviceship was severe, being only one year.

Our holy Mistress left nothing undone for our spiritual improvement.

My dear companion, Sr. M. Elizabeth, was not sufficiently strong,  
besides being very scrupulous, so that her health was broken down.

She died about four months after her profession, which was a great trial to us,  
particularly to me.

(continued on next page)

There was some difficulty regarding our profession  
as our vows could not be the same as these made by the community.  
They submitted the difficulty to Most Revd. Dr. Murray,  
who removed it by the form of vow which he proposed.  
He came himself some time before our profession and examined us,  
particularly on our profession in the new order  
“we are about to erect called *of the Sisters of Mercy.*”

The profession took place on the 12<sup>th</sup> of December 1831.  
The reception and profession should have been on the feast of the Conception,  
but being the feast day of the Church of the Conception,  
his Grace could not attend.  
Soon after the ceremony we returned to Baggot St.  
accompanied by Revd. Dr. Blake who said as we were coming  
that the Order of Mercy should be dated from that day.  
Before we left the convent he in the presence of the Superioress  
congratulated us on the manner in which we spent our noviciate,  
what edification we had given,  
and hoped we would infuse the same spirit  
to those to whom we were returning.

**Gospel: Annunciation (Luke 1:26–38)**

Reader: Patrick Hume sj

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke:

In the sixth month,  
the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth,  
to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David,  
and the virgin's name was Mary.

And coming to her, he said,

“Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.”

But she was greatly troubled at what was said  
and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

Then the angel said to her,

“Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son,  
and you shall name him Jesus.

He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High,  
and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father,  
and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever,  
and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

But Mary said to the angel,

“How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?”

And the angel said to her in reply,

“The holy Spirit will come upon you,

and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.

Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.

And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age,  
and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren;  
for nothing will be impossible for God.”

Mary said,

“Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord.

May it be done to me according to your word.”

Then the angel departed from her.

The Gospel of the Lord.