

*Fr. Perozich comments —*

*How fitting are these readings from the last Saturday of Ordinary Time and from the office of readings from St. Andrew, apostle as we prepare for advent and the 3 comings of Jesus:*

- 1. His first coming in humility and weakness;*
- 2. His final coming in glory and majesty;*
- 3. His current coming now in power and spirit, his presence among us right now (St. Bernard of Clairvaux.)*

*It can be easy to fall into despair and frustration over the confusion in the church today. It has always been there, and it seems always will be there until Jesus comes again.*

*The admonition of Jude describes some who live according to their desires of what the church should be, devoid of the Spirit, rather than the church God has called into being.*

*Our response is to have mercy on those who waver, and to those who are stained to have mercy with fear.*

*Keep your faith in Jesus even when you are disappointed in the faith expression of church leaders.*

*St. Augustine reminds us Christians who are on the way to salvation that this world is a time of trials, sin, repentance, suffering, labor.*

*He encourages hymns of “alleluia” to God to ease the labors of this life, not to live here on earth life of leisure.*

*St. John Chrysostom lauds Andrew as one who brings others to Jesus. Do the same. This is our life in Christ on earth.*

## **EPISTLE OF JUDE**

**1** Jude, a slave of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept safe for Jesus Christ: **2** may mercy, peace, and love be yours in abundance.

**3** Beloved, although I was making every effort to write to you about our common salvation, I now feel a need to

write to encourage you to **contend for the faith that was once for all handed down to the holy ones.**

4 For there have been **some intruders**, who long ago were designated for this condemnation, **godless persons, who pervert the grace of our God into licentiousness and who deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.**

5 I wish to remind you, although you know all things, that [the] Lord who once saved a people from the land of Egypt later destroyed those who did not believe.\*

6 The angels too, who did not keep to their own domain but deserted their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains, in gloom, for the judgment of the great day.

7 Likewise, Sodom, Gomorrah, and the surrounding towns, which, in the same manner as they, indulged in sexual promiscuity and practiced unnatural vice,\* serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

8 **Similarly, these dreamers\* nevertheless also defile the flesh, scorn lordship, and revile glorious beings.**

9 Yet the archangel Michael, when he argued with the devil in a dispute over the body of Moses, did not venture to pronounce a reviling judgment\* upon him but said, “May the Lord rebuke you!”

10 But these people revile what they do not understand and are destroyed by what they know by nature like irrational animals.<sup>i</sup>

11 Woe to them! They followed the way of Cain, abandoned themselves to Balaam’s error for the sake of gain, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.\*

12 These are blemishes on your love feasts,\* as they carouse fearlessly and look after themselves. They are waterless clouds blown about by winds, fruitless trees in late autumn, twice dead and uprooted.

13 They are like wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shameless deeds, wandering stars for whom the gloom of darkness has been reserved forever.

14 Enoch, of the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied also about them when he said, “Behold, the Lord has come with his countless holy ones 15 to execute judgment on all and to convict everyone for all the godless deeds that they committed and for all the harsh words godless sinners have uttered against him.”

**16 These people are complainers, disgruntled ones who live by their desires; their mouths utter bombast as they fawn over people to gain advantage.**

17 But you, beloved, remember the words spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, 18 for they told you, **“In [the] last time there will be scoffers who will live according to their own godless desires.”**

**19 These are the ones who cause divisions; they live on the natural plane, devoid of the Spirit.**

20 But you, beloved, build yourselves up in your most holy faith; pray in the holy Spirit.

21 Keep yourselves in the love of God and wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.

**22 On those who waver, have mercy;\* 23 save others by snatching them out of the fire; on others have**

**mercy with fear, abhorring even the outer garment stained by the flesh.**

24 To the one who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you unblemished and exultant, in the presence of his glory, 25 to the only God, our savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord be glory, majesty, power, and authority from ages past, now, and for ages to come. Amen.

From a sermon by Saint Augustine, bishop  
(Sermo 256, 1.3.4; PL 38, 1191-1193)

*Let us sing alleluia to the good God who delivers us from evil*

**Let us sing alleluia here on earth, while we still live in anxiety, so that we may sing it one day in heaven in full security.** Why do we now live in anxiety? Can you expect me not to feel anxious when I read: ***Is not man's life on earth a time of trial?*** Can you expect me not to feel anxious when the words still ring in my ears: *Watch and pray that you will not be put to the test?* Can you expect me not to feel anxious when there are so many temptations here below that prayer itself reminds us of them, when we say: *Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us?* Every day we make out petitions, every day we sin. Do you want me to feel secure when I am daily asking pardon for my sins, and requesting help in time of trial? Because of my past sins I

pray: *Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us*, and then, because of the perils still before me, I immediately go on to add: *Lead us not into temptation*. How can all be well with people who are crying out with me: *Deliver us from evil*? And yet, brothers, while we are still in the midst of this evil, let us sing alleluia to the good God who delivers us from evil.

**Even here amidst trials and temptations let us, let all men, sing alleluia.** *God is faithful, says holy Scripture, and he will not allow you to be tried beyond your strength.* So let us sing alleluia, even here on earth. Man is still a debtor, but God is faithful. **Scripture does not say that he will not allow you to be tried, but that he will not allow you to be tried beyond your strength.** Whatever the trial, he will see you through it safely, and so enable you to endure. You have entered upon a time of trial but you will come to no harm - God's help will bring you through it safely. You are like a piece of pottery, shaped by instruction, fired by tribulation. When you are put into the oven therefore, keep your thoughts on the time when you will be taken out again; for God is faithful, and *he will guard both your going in and your coming out.*

But in the next life, when this body of ours has become immortal and incorruptible, then all trials will be over. *Your body is indeed dead, and why? Because of sin.* Nevertheless, *your spirit lives, because you have been justified.* Are we to leave our dead bodies behind then? By no means. Listen to the words of holy Scripture: *If the Spirit of him who raised Christ from the dead dwells*

*within you, then he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your own mortal bodies. At present your body receives its life from the soul, but then it will receive it from the Spirit.*

**O the happiness of the heavenly alleluia, sung in security, in fear of no adversity!** We shall have no enemies in heaven, we shall never lose a friend. God's praises are sung both there and here, but here they are sung by those destined to die, there, by those destined to live for ever; here they are sung in hope, there, in hope's fulfillment; here they are sung by wayfarers, there, by those living in their own country.

**So, then, my brothers, let us sing now, not in order to enjoy a life of leisure, but in order to lighten our labors.** You should sing as wayfarers do - sing, but continue your journey. Do not be lazy, but sing to make your journey more enjoyable. Sing, but keep going. What do I mean by keep going? **Keep on making progress. This progress, however, must be in virtue; for there are some, the Apostle warns, whose only progress is in vice.** If you make progress, you will be continuing your journey, but **be sure that your progress is in virtue, true faith and right living. Sing then, but keep going.**

From a homily on the gospel of John by St John Chrysostom, bishop  
(Hom. 19, 1: PG 59, 120-121)

## *We have found the Messiah*

After Andrew had stayed with Jesus and had learned much from him, he did not keep this treasure to himself, but hastened to share it with his brother. Notice what Andrew said to him: *We have found the Messiah, that is to say, the Christ*. Notice how his words reveal what he has learned in so short a time. **They show the power of the master who has convinced them of this truth.** They reveal the zeal and concern of men preoccupied with this question from the very beginning. Andrew's words reveal a soul waiting with the utmost longing for the coming of the Messiah, looking forward to his appearing from heaven, rejoicing when he does appear, and hastening to announce so great an event to others. To support one another in the things of the spirit is the true sign of good will between brothers, of loving kinship and sincere affection.

Notice, too, how, even from the beginning, Peter is **docile and receptive in spirit. He hastens to Jesus without delay. *He brought him to Jesus***, says the evangelist. But Peter must not be condemned for his readiness to accept Andrew's word without much weighing of it. It is probable that his brother had given him, and many others, a careful account of the event; the evangelists, in the interest of brevity, regularly summarize a lengthy narrative. Saint John does not say that Peter believed immediately, but that *he brought him to Jesus*. Andrew was to hand him over to Jesus, to learn everything for himself. There was also another disciple present, and he hastened with them for the same purpose.

When John the Baptist said: *This is the Lamb*, and *he baptizes in the Spirit*, he left the deeper understanding of these things to be received from Christ. All the more so would Andrew act in the same way, since he did not think himself able to give a complete explanation. **He brought his brother to the very source of light, and Peter was so joyful and eager that he would not delay even for a moment.**