

8. 2. 71  
3. 2. 72  
8. 2. 73  
16. 1. 78

Palestine Hand [Janet  
A-17 150]  
Kyrie (Fauré)  
Deiss (Joyce Kilmer)  
RHK

ANGELUS.

"And I heard the voice of the Lord saying: Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Here am I, send me" Read in isolation from what has preceded it, that sounds like a very brash forwardness on the part of the prophet Isaiah, telling of the beginning of his mission from God. For any man to claim he has a mission from God, to put himself forward as a messenger of the Lord, is the height of pride, presumption and folly, unless he really has been chosen; for who, knowing the holiness of God and in any way realising his own weakness & sinfulness could presume to take on himself such a task? Like the scripture says about the priesthood of Mt: "no one chooses this honour for himself..." "It is only by God's call that a man is made a high priest." But this doesn't prevent there being false prophets; right through the Bible their existence too is recognised; and the history of the Church shows the same. One of the difficulties is to recognise what is what, especially if it's true that a prophet is not known by the people to whom he's sent, and if a true disciple of Christ will be known by the good fruits he produces. If you're a fan of the Peanuts cartoon-strip, you may remember the one where Charlie Brown confides his ambition to be a prophet, when he goes up - only to be deflated by that down-to-earth thorn in his side, Lucy, who reminds him that there are false prophets too & he'd probably be one of them. But idealistic as ever, Charlie Brown ecstatically <sup>reuses</sup> ~~repeats~~: Maybe I cd. be a good false-prophet! Quite often too, the people God chooses as His priests & prophets don't want to take on the task - they try to avoid it, act against it (Jeremiah, St Paul are two immediate scriptural examples) because they think it too hard, or themselves unworthy and unable. Both of these

reasons are of course true, for any man. And it's only a man who really recognises that this is so, who knows his own sinfulness before the holiness of God, his own inability to do what God wants of him, that God can make use of as His messenger & spokesman or His priest. So with Isaiah, who saw in a vision the holiness of God before whom he was as someone unclear; only when the fire of God's purity, love and truth had touched him was he made able for the task that he knew God called him for. (It was the same, for instance, with St Peter whom Our Lord told He wd. make a fisher of men - but this wasn't until after Peter had recognised the power and presence of God in the miraculous catch of fish, and had humbled himself before Christ saying 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord'. Of course God is not limited in the means He can use to bring about His purposes in the people and the world He created - His providence is at work all the time, and through what may seem to some to be the most unlikely instruments: in the O.T., Darius the King of Persia, for instance, is considered as an instrument of God - and he's only one. Yet, from the revelation God has made of Himself to man, it is clear that He wishes to preserve the freedom & free will He has given and to draw men into a personal relationship of love with Himself. In other words, He really entrusts His work in the world to people who will give themselves to Him and allow Him to work thro' them, people who will acknowledge His holiness & love, realising their own unworthiness and inability to do His will except in union with Him. But don't think that this is a special vocation reserved only for saints or such extraordinary people - it is, really, the call given to every Christian whom God has chosen to be a disciple of His Son in faith & hope & love. Think about it while we listen now to a prayer <sup>a modern religious beat-song, "Are you afraid" [RHK-PIL-0-3]</sup> in Russian, part of Ps 44 from the "Officium" of the Novgorod Rite setting of O Sacrum Convivium by Paganini [RHK/ARCO] MUSIC - PRAYERS

OUR FATHER  
Man from Saltee  
Missa Flareana  
5262

Every Christian has his or her own special grace and gift from God, given in those fundamental gifts of faith, hope and love. They too have to be received, supposing a humility before God and a recognition of one's own need of His salvation. Our faith implies and includes a conversion towards God which recognizes His holiness and our own sinfulness, and His giving His grace is itself a vocation and a mission. So, an adult faith in God will be more than just a belief that "God will provide", that God will see to it that what is needed for human life and development, and the salvation of the world will come about. There is a part each of us has to take, not merely for ourselves individually but in the whole working of God's grace in the world. Instead of saying: what's the Church doing or going to do about this or that, it shd. be what can I do and how am I going to do it — for the Church is each and all of us who have been called to faith in Christ. Instead of saying: why doesn't the government do this or that for the needs of the people, it shd. first be a question of what I can and am willing to do. Each of us has different abilities and talents, and there are countless ways of engaging these in the service of our neighbours and of God. Isn't there someone you can console and encourage by just going to visit them — someone who's ill or lonely or friendless? Isn't there someone with problems you can help solve? Someone in need that you can help, even partially? Someone who's been a victim of unfairness or injustice to whom you can help bring redress. The social problems of a city like ours can't be just shrugged off onto government or some other organization: ~~we~~ Christians shd. be concerned at every level, wherever their talents, abilities and the call of God may lead them, sent by His grace.