

The prophet for this week is Isaiah. We shouldn't be too surprised. Isaiah is the 'go to' prophet for Jesus and for the Church.

I always find it interesting that the prophet Isaiah covered the period before the exile into Babylon, the period during the exile and the period after exile. He was the prophet who was most on the spot, as any worthy news reporter. The only exception to his news reporting was that it probably wasn't the same person over this period of time. As we know, in the Scriptures, the 'spirit' of one writer becomes the 'spirit' of the next who take on the persona of the previous person (this explains a little as to why we have so many 'Johns' in the New Testament).

The reading today is from the first Isaiah. He is looking at a people who are not even aware of how far they have fallen from God. They are caught up in a world where they don't even have any sense of what they do and why they do what they do. They are carrying out religious activity with no sincerity. If only they would see more clearly into the heart of God, cease to do evil and do good, especially for the most vulnerable. Then, their 'religion' would truly be a response to God.

This is reflective of the theme of the Gospel reading for today. Jesus is speaking about dissension in the family life. He is raising the issue of having a priority for himself over the ordinary relationships of the family. In fact, he is calling us to be more 'ordinary' in our relationship with himself before our relationships with others. He is calling us to have a better approach to God early in our lives, before we fall into a completely misunderstood approach to human relationships which don't have relationship with God as the priority.

His words about prophets, holy men and cups of water all remind us of the world in which we live. How important to give priority to what is of most value, even a cup of water to a little one – an unimportant one.