

June 14th

Saint ELISHA the prophet

Optional memorial

Elisha, son of Shaphat, was the disciple of Elijah and his successor as a prophet of Judah, between 850 and 800. He was plowing his field near Jericho, when Elijah, returning from the Sinai and through the Jordan Valley, called him in the name of God to become his follower, which he did without delay (1 Kgs 19: 19 ff.). His role remained very discreet during the lifetime of his master, but at the time of death of Elijah, Elisha inherited his prophetic spirit, symbolized by his receiving of the mantle of Elijah (2 Kgs 2), whereas his political involvement and charismatic deeds show him to have been one of the most striking figures of his time for over 50 years. The Book of Kings recounts the miracles of this prophet: how he cleansed the spring that bears his name in Jericho, the healing of Naaman the Syrian, the miracle of the widow's oil and the resurrection of her son, and how, after his death, his bones had the power to awaken the dead (2 Kgs 2-8, 2 Kgs 13: 20).

The vocation of Elisha reminds us of the absolute God. Throughout his life, this prophet was amongst men, a sign of the power of the Holy Spirit who "renews the face of the earth". Let us be moved by this Spirit so that the hope and life that come from Christ may enlighten our world.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: 2 Kings 2: 9. 15b

Elisha asked Elijah, "May I receive a double portion of your spirit". And the spirit of Elijah remained with Elisha.

COLLECT

O God, you willed that the Prophet Elisha should follow Elijah and walk in his spirit; graciously grant us that by the gifts of your Spirit we may attain to holiness of life.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ....

FIRST READING

A reading from the second book of Kings 5: 7a. 8-15a

When he read the letter, the king of Israel tore his garments and exclaimed: "Am I a god with power over life and death, that this man should send someone to me to be cured of leprosy?" When Elisha, the man of God, heard that the king of Israel had torn his garments, he sent word to the king: "Why have you torn your garments? Let him come to me and find out that there is a prophet in Israel."

Naaman came with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door of Elisha's house. The prophet sent him the message: "Go and wash seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will heal, and you will be clean." But Naaman went away angry, saying, "I thought that he would surely come out and stand there to invoke the LORD his God, and would move his hand over the spot, and thus cure the leprosy. Are not the rivers of Damascus, the Abana and the Pharpar, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be cleansed?" With this, he turned about in anger and left.

But his servants came up and reasoned with him. "My father," they said, "if the prophet had told you to do something extraordinary, would you not have done it? All the more now, since he said to you, 'Wash and be clean,' should you do as he said." So Naaman went down and plunged into the Jordan seven times at the word of the man of God. His flesh became again like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. He returned with his whole retinue to the man of God. On his arrival he stood before him and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel".

The Word of the Lord.

Or else:

A reading from the second book of Kings 2: 11-15a

As they walked on conversing, a flaming chariot and flaming horses came between them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind. When Elisha saw it happen he cried out, "My father! my father! Israel's chariots and drivers!" But when he could no longer see him, Elisha gripped his own garment and tore it in two.

Then he picked up Elijah's mantle which had fallen from him, and went back and stood at the bank of the Jordan.

Wielding the mantle which had fallen from Elijah, he struck the water in his turn and said, "Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah?" When Elisha struck the water it divided and he crossed over. The guild prophets in Jericho, who were on the other side, saw him and said, "The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha".

RESPONSORIAL PSALM 104: 1, 24, 27-28, 29bc-30 (R. 30)

R. You send forth your spirit, and they are created, and you renew the face of the earth.

1. Bless the LORD, O my soul!
O LORD my God, how great you are,
clothed in majesty and honor,
wrapped in light as with a robe!
In wisdom you have made them all.
The earth is full of your creatures.

2. All of these look to you
to give them their food in due season.
You give it, they gather it up;
you open wide your hand, they are well filled.

3. you take away their breath, they die,
returning to the dust from which they came.
You send forth your spirit, and they are created,
and you renew the face of the earth.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION 2 Kings 2: 22

R. Alleluia. Alleluia.
And the water has stayed pure even to this day, just as Elisha prophesied.
R. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke 4: 24-27

Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and he said, "Amen, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own native place. Indeed, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah when the sky was closed for three and a half years and a severe famine spread over the entire land. It was to none of these that Elijah was sent, but only to a widow in Zarephath in the land of

Sidon. Again, there were many lepers in Israel during the time of Elisha the prophet; yet not one of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian."

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord, we offer you this sacrifice of praise, humbly asking that, through the intercession of your prophet, you will graciously accept it and grant us your salvation.

Through Christ our Lord.

PREFACE

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts...

COMMUNION ANTIPHON 2 Kings 13: 21

When the man touched the bones of Elisha he revived and stood up.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord, may the receiving of your sacrament continually purify us and, through the intercession of your holy prophet Elisha, may we merit to experience an abundance of heavenly joys.

Through Christ our Lord.