

October 21 Hiram Hisanori Kano 1986

The Rev. Hiram Hisanori Kano, an Episcopal priest known by some as the "Saint of Nebraska and Colorado," was an agricultural missionary among Japanese Americans in western Nebraska and, while himself a prisoner during the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, a pastor to American soldiers imprisoned for having been AWOL. Fr. Kano, born into a Japanese noble family in Tokyo on January 30, 1889, suffered a ruptured appendix while studying agricultural economics at the Imperial University of Tokyo. During the medical procedure, he received a vision of God and "surrendered" himself. When he began reading the Bible as a result of the experience, he became convinced that his vision had been of the risen Christ. In 1910, he was baptized by Dutch Reformed missionaries. In 1916, he felt God calling him to America to assist the Japanese settlers making a home in the Midwest to farm. In the early 1920's, Bishop George Allen Beecher of the Missionary District of Western Nebraska discerned, in farmer and educator Kano, the evangelist he was seeking to call Nebraska's Japanese to be God's people. A lay missionary first, Kano was ordained deacon in 1928 and priest in 1936. By the spring of 1934, 250 people had been baptized and 50 confirmed through his ministry. After arrest on the morning of the Pearl Harbor attack despite his own defense and pleas from his bishop, he spent the next two years in internment camps. He spent time in four different states, always working to help the other internees and imprisoned AWOL soldiers. He served as dean of a school for the internees and taught many courses in agricultural study and English, and he preached the gospel. After Fr. Kano's release in 1944, he was sent to study at Nashotah House, the Episcopal seminary in Wisconsin, where he earned a master's degree in 1946. He then returned to his ministry in Nebraska. When the U.S. government finally offered reparations for the internments, Fr. Kano told his bishop, "I don't want the money. God just used that as another opportunity for me to preach the gospel." Fr. Kano retired in 1957 and moved with his wife to a small farm in Fort Collins, Colorado. He died on October 24, 1988.

Collect

Almighty God, who has reconciled the world to yourself through Christ: Entrust to your Church the ministry of reconciliation, as you did to your servant Hiram Hisanori Kano, and raise up ambassadors for Christ to proclaim your love and peace wherever conflict and hatred divide; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Lessons

1 Corinthians 15:1–11

Now I would remind you, brethren, in what terms I preached to you the gospel, which you received, in which you stand, by which you are saved, if you hold it fast—unless you believed in vain.

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he

appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God which is with me. Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

Psalm 1

1 Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked, *nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats of the scornful!

2 Their delight is in the law of the Lord, *and they meditate on his law day and night.

3 They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in due season, with leaves that do not wither; *everything they do shall prosper.

4 It is not so with the wicked; *they are like chaff which the wind blows away.

5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when judgment comes, *nor the sinner in the council of the righteous.

6 For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, *but the way of the wicked is doomed.

Matthew 12:1–8

At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the sabbath; his disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, "Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the sabbath." He said to them, "Have you not read what David did, when he was hungry, and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? Or have you not read in the law how on the sabbath the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are guiltless? I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. And if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is lord of the sabbath."