

LECTIO DIVINA (Holy Reading)
PRAYING WITH THE SACRED SCRIPTURES
Sunday 10 June 2018
10th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B.
For those who pray the Liturgy of the Hours the Psalter takes Week Two.

Before beginning prayer with the Sacred Texts, let us take a look at the week ahead in Liturgy, the Australian Church and the Social Justice Calendar.

In the Liturgy:

June 11: St. Barnabas (Memorial)

June 13: St. Anthony of Padua (Memorial)

The Social Justice Calendar:

June 10: Myall Creek Massacre – 1838

June 10: Alcoholics Anonymous was founded in New York in 1935.

June 11: Enactment of the Racial Discrimination Act – 1975

June 12: World day against Child Labour

June 14: World Blood Donor Day.

June 15: World Elder Abuse Day

The Australian Church:

June 15: Maitland-Newcastle – Episcopal Ordination of Bishop William Wright (2011)

Perth: Episcopal Ordination of Archbishop Timothy Costelloe, SBD, 2007

LET US NOW MOVE INTO PRAYER WITH THE SACRED TEXTS

The readings are:

Genesis 3:9-15

2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1

Mark 3:20-35.

Lectio: Read the first reading from the Book of Genesis, chapter 3, verses 9-15. Read the sacred text slowly and prayerfully, really listening as you read aloud. This is about our on-going conversion.

Meditatio: Understanding the text so that we can immerse ourselves in it, and make our response to it.

On a first reading, it is clear as to the meaning – what was a paradise, has been destroyed by temptation.

God had asked of the man and woman just one thing: not to eat of the tree of knowledge.

They were placed in a garden paradise.

They were created into innocence.

They were naked. It was a beautiful nakedness.

God walked with them in the cool of the evening.
Then, all was destroyed by temptation.
Worse than “temptation” was the “blame game”.
The man blamed the woman
The woman blamed the serpent.
God banished the serpent from the garden of paradise.
This is the understanding which the Israelites had of the creation of human beings.
Other religions have similar stories, especially those around the Mediterranean area.

Take time to ponder on this text in the days ahead as you go about your work, rest, recreation. Allow the Holy Spirit to work on the fibres of your heart, and bring forth the melody of your response to this text. I share mine in *Evangelizatio 1*.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 129

The response is: WITH THE LORD THERE IS MERCY, AND FULLNESS OF REDEMPTION.

Psalm 129 is a psalm of repentance and trust. The Psalmist, aware of people’s faithfulness is equally sure of God’s answer to repentance. (cf. Nehemiah 1:7-9).

Lectio: Read the second text from 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1.

Meditatio: Some background to the text so that we understand it better and can then make our response.

There are four spiritual and theological truths in this text:

- The spirit of faith drives Paul to address the Corinthian Church.
- The content of the address: the resurrection and its consequences. God will raise us with Jesus, and we will be placed by his side in the kingdom.
- The outer person (the body) may gradually decay, but the inner person is renewed day by day.
- We have eyes for things invisible, for things which are eternal, because our everlasting home is in the heavens.

Read the text again and allow the Holy Spirit to work on your heart. Listen to the Holy Spirit praying within you and prompting you to respond to words, phrases, sentences which call you forth and challenge you. I share my response in *Evangelizatio 2*.

The Gospel Verse is from John 12:31 & 32 .

THE PRINCE OF THIS WORLD WILL NOW BE CAST OUT,
AND WHEN I AM LIFTED UP FROM THE EARTH I WILL DRAW ALL TO
MYSELF, SAYS THE LORD.

Lectio: Read the Gospel text from Mark 3:20-35.

Read it slowly and reflectively, and maybe a second time. Try to read aloud rather than with the mind. Listen to the text as you read.

Meditatio: What is it about?

It is good to have a trusted commentary for this Gospel, because this text is a “pericope” which “follows an outline:

(A) the charge made by Jesus’ family (3:19b-21); Jesus’ judgment on his relatives (3:31-35).

(B) the charge made by the scribes (3:22); Jesus’ defense (3:21-27) Jesus judgment on the scribes (3:28-30) (NJBC 4:23)

Perhaps our minds go quickly to the first reading from Genesis. It was God who banished Satan from Paradise. God can’t cast our God. Satan cannot cast out Satan.

Then there follows that terrible text about a house divided against itself. This Gospel text deals with, for example, a Christian community, where everyone has professed to live by the Gospel, and yet is divided against itself. We have experienced that within the Catholic Church, and other Churches have also experienced it. Division destroys. Unity builds up and enables Christian Communities to survive.

Read the Gospel text a number of times during the week. Sit with the text for many “quiet” times. Listen to the Holy Spirit playing like a harpist on the fibres of your heart, to bring forth the melody of your response. I share my response in *Evangelizatio 3*.

EVANGELIZATIO: My lived response to the texts with which the Church gives me each Sunday for my formation as a Christian. St. James says “Be doers of the Word.” And the Book of Deuteronomy tells us that the Word of God is in our hands to do it.

1. My response is to the realization by the man and woman, that they are naked, and to the notion of “blame”. Many of us who read and pray with this text are among those who have been humiliated and exposed, ridiculed, or sexually and verbally abused. And we have become “naked” persons, unable to do things which may put us in the limelight. Have we been made stand in front of the class because our efforts were not good enough? Have we been ridiculed at school because we wore glasses, or had a slight facial disfigurement? We have gone through life feeling naked and hiding from public exposure, taking cover in our isolation. If we’ve been sexually or physically abused, we may want to dull the pain by hiding in alcohol or drugs (prescribed or otherwise). When we are born we are born into innocence. The destruction of that innocence is caused by the actions just mentioned. If we have been spared of all this, then we have much to thank God for. If we watch DVDs about World War I and II, we will probably witness smoking, in just about every scene. This was a way for men and women to dull the pain of what they were experiencing. We all need to think seriously about our need to hide, as did the first man and woman – our need to hide from God and family/friends because of the actions of others – the way they have exposed us and humiliated us. Of course, “blaming” will not get us very far. Blaming can be an easy escape route, while we once again withdraw from the world. It can become a way of life.
2. My response is to the promise of an everlasting home, waiting for us, when God calls us home. I watched a You Tube Video recently (shown to

me by an Oblate), - Pope Francis before an audience of school children. One little boy wanted to ask the Pope a question but didn't have the courage. The Pope asked someone to bring the child to him, and asked the little boy to whisper the question in his ear. This was done. The question was: My daddy died recently. He wasn't a believer, but he had all of us baptized. Is he with God in heaven? The little boy went back to his place. The Pope told the children what the question was, and asked them all: "What do you think is the answer?" They all replied in a resounding "yes". It was very moving to experience this. "There is a house built by God for us." On the other hand, I believe that God will not be mocked. Those of us who are believers, have been given the gift of faith, and therefore more is expected of us.

3. I am responding to the house divided against itself. I have lived in a lot of communities, religious and monastic. Only once did I experience divisions within the house, and yes - the divisions destroyed community life. We all attended Mass and said our prayers and all the externals were kept up. But – we were divided. It caused me to make a strong decision: I will never be the cause of division within any community, either by my words or by my actions. Community in Christ is about building up, not destroying.

Lectio Divina is about reading the Sacred Scriptures and reflecting on them from an informed background.

It is allowing the Holy Spirit to play on the fibres of my heart like a harpist, and bring forth the beauty of my response.

In responding to the text, my life is changed more and more into Christ.