

LECTIO DIVINA (Holy Reading)
PRAYING WITH THE SACRED SCRIPTURES
Sunday 7 July 2019
14th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C.
For those who pray the Liturgy of the Hours the Psalter takes Week Two

Before moving into prayer with the Sacred Scriptures, let us look at the week ahead in the Liturgy, the Social Justice Calendar and the Australian Church.

In the Liturgy:

July 11: St. Benedict - Memorial in most Parishes; Feast in Benedictine communities.

In The Social Justice Calendar:

July 7, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday. Beginning of NAIDOC Week.

1945: Blessed Peter To Rot was martyred in Papua New Guinea.

July 10: 1985 – Sinking of Greenpeace ship “Rainbow Warrior” in Auckland

July 11: World Population Day

July 12: 1971 – Aboriginal Flag first flown in Adelaide

In the Australian Church:

July 11: Toowoomba – Episcopal Ordination of Bishop Robert McGuckin, 2012.

Adelaide – Anniversary of the Dedication of the Cathedral, 1996.

LET US NOW MOVE INTO PRAYER WITH THE SACRED TEXTS

The readings are:

Isaiah 66:10-14

Galatians 6:14-18

Luke 10:1-12, 17-20

***Lectio:* Read the first text from the Prophet Isaiah, chapter 66, verses 10-14.**

Read it aloud. Read it slowly. Be aware of the Holy Spirit placing unction on the message of this text. When your heart responds to a word or a line, or a phrase, this is the Holy Spirit touching your heart and calling forth your response.

***Meditatio:* A little background to the text will help us understand it and make a**

response to it. The text is from Third (Trito) Isaiah, and is a small “stanza” towards the end of the Prophecy. In this stanza, the text “sings with the ecstatic joy of Deutero- Isaiah.” (Second Isaiah – the Book of Comfort).”The poet is continually crying out, ‘Rejoice’ to the new Jerusalem.” Stuhlmüller notes that “joy permeates many poems of Trito-Isaiah...a fact easily overlooked in his strident opposition to false Temple worship. God’s children nurse at the breast of Jerusalem – a lovely image of peace and contentment.” We are referred to the following texts to get into touch more deeply with the motherhood of God: Isaiah 42:14; 45:10; 49:15 (New Jerome Biblical Commentary 21:69).

Take time to ponder on this reading. Only after reflecting will you be in touch with the response that the Holy Spirit is calling forth from you.

I share my response to this reading in *Evangelizatio* 1.

The Rpsorial Psalm: Psalm 65

The response is: LET ALL THE EARTH CRY OUT TO GOD WITH JOY.

The theme of “joy” continues.

Psalm 65 is a prayer of thanksgiving. It is one of those psalms which exudes praise, blessing, praise, praise, praise. It recalls what the Lord has done for his people in the past.

If we have joy in our hearts over what the Lord has done for us, then we can enter into the Psalm, or re-write it our way. The Psalmist says that God has not rejected his (their) prayer, or withheld his love.

Lectio: Read the Second Mass Reading: Galatians 6:14-18.

Meditatio: A little background on the text, so we can best respond to it.

This short text is another ending. Paul’s Farewell Blessing. It begins at verse 11. The text we are given begins at vs. 14. We need to read 6:12 to understand 6:14. 6:12 is about “Judaizers who “fear that if they preach the real message of the cross, they might be persecuted for it by Jews or other Judaizers.” We may be wondering: Who is a Judaizer? A Judaizer is a Jew who lays upon Gentile Christians, Jewish practices, such as, circumcision, dietary and calendaric regulations. (Cf. NJBC 82:36)

The message Paul preaches is about the whole Christ-event. There is one focus: Jesus Christ. And what do we make of: “...through which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.”?

The meaning of “world” gives us the answer. In this context it means all that “stands at enmity with God, the sphere of pleasure and ambition related to the flesh”, and it is the Judaizers who find their boast in this kind of thing: circumcision fasting, eating, observing many festivals. So, for Paul, it is all about the cross of Christ. To all the pleasure of the flesh, Paul has died.

Read the text a few times and reflect on it.

Make your response in the days ahead. I share my response in *Evangelizatio 2*.

The Gospel Verse is Colossians 3:15 & 16.

MAY THE PEACE OF CHRIST RULE IN YOUR HEARTS,
AND THE FULLNESS OF HIS MESSAGE LIVE WITHIN YOU.

Lectio: The Gospel is Luke 10:1-12 & 17-20

Meditatio: Some background to the text which will help us respond.

We could name the first part of the text as: “Get going”, and the second part: “Get it straight.” The entire story is Luke 10:1-24.

The disciples are sent in pairs to preach the Kingdom of God. Robert Karris, in his commentary on Luke’s gospel notes that there are three reasons for sending the disciples out in pairs: (1) mutual support; (2) bearing witness to the truth of their testimony, (cf. Deut. 19;15; (3) living embodiment of the Gospel of peace.”

Karris also gives a deeply meaningful explanation for, “lambs among wolves”, saying that: “This powerful image has two dimensions: the missionaries may be defenceless

before hostile people, and the Christian mission inaugurates a new era of peace and reconciliation in which the lamb will lie down with the wolf (Is 11:6).” Verse 17 mentions demons, and recalls the power of Jesus over the demons in Galilee (8:26-39). Verse 18 tells us that “in Jesus’ ministry and that of his Church the powers of evil are attacked and overcome.

Verse 19: the serpent and the scorpion were known to be sources of physical evil in Palestinian life, and also OT symbols of all kinds of evil.

Verse 20: Luke “tempers enthusiasm for missionary success with a “get it straight!” Beware of taking the glory for oneself, and beware of counting how much one has done as a disciple of Jesus – how much one has accomplished, how often “the spirits submit to you...” One should be rejoicing because one’s name is written in heaven.

Listen for the message you are to hear in this Gospel text, and be still, as you receive the visitation of God into your life through God’s Sacred Word. When you feel called to do so, make your response to the text. I share mine in Evangelizatio 3.

EVANGELIZATIO. Evangelizatio is about the evangelization of the “self”. It is that part of Lectio Divina where we make our lived response to the text. First of all, we pray with the text, take time to ponder and understand the text, be still with the text and listen to the response we are being called to make.

1. What calls to me in this text is the theme of “joy”. In speeches preceding the Second Vatican Council, Blessed John XXIII embraced the theme: “Everything tuned to joy.” Blessed Julian of Norwich said that “the fullness of joy is to see God in all things.” What a positive approach to life. William Ullathorne, Benedictine Pioneer in Australia, ahead of Archbishop Polding said that “nothing contributes more to a joyful heart, than the habit of looking at the good side of things. And the good side is God’s side.” So, for me, this week will be just that: looking at the good side, thinking positively, speaking positively, acting positively.
2. I am responding to the Judaizers, because they are alive and well in our own times. St. Benedict, in his rule, describes three kinds of monks. The third kind, of three kinds, are the sarabaites. They are not unlike the Judaizers who were trying to destroy Paul. St. Benedict says of them: “Their law is what they like to do, whatever strikes their fancy. Anything they believe in and choose, they call holy. Sarabaites and Judaizers are everywhere in society, in ecclesiastical circles, in all cultures. Some of us are encountering Judaizers at our meetings leading up to the 2020 Summit. “What they like they call holy.” But this text is for me first of all. It’s no good pointing the finger at others. In what way am I a Judaizer? In what way do I want every law and custom set in cement? I lose my way now and then, but return to the cross of Christ. Only the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ is new every morning – set on firm foundations for all time. Judaizers and Sarabaites eventually die from the exhaustion of trying to make every other person do what they insist is ‘holy’.
3. What are sources of physical evil in our own times? Drugs, alcoholism, bullying, racial hatred, consumerism, rape of the earth, destruction of wild life

habitats for the sake of greed. woodchips for export, (pity about the koalas). Sexual abuse of anyone is surely a physical evil (as well as a crime); elder abuse; verbal and emotional abuse; domestic violence which sees babies and very young children bruised and thrown against walls and shower screens. We have a lot to pray about this week.

*Lectio Divina is prayer with the Sacred Scriptures.
We read, we seek to understand with the help of a commentary,
we ponder, we take time for stillness
and we respond.
It is a way of life, not a method of prayer.
Take the Mother of God as your model.*