

**LECTIO DIVINA (Holy Reading)
PRAYING WITH THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.
Sunday 24 October 2021**

**30th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B
For those who pray the Liturgy of the Hours, the Psalter takes Week Two**

Today is World Mission Sunday. If there is a special celebration for Mission Sunday, the Mass for the Spread of the Gospel may be used. Normally, Masses for Special Needs and Votive Masses are not used on Sundays.

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

In the Liturgy:

28: Saints Simon and Jude

In the Australian Church:

27: Melbourne – Anniversary of the Dedication of the Cathedral, 1897.

In the Social Justice Calendar:

24: United Nations Day. On this day in 1945, the United Nations was established.

26: Return of Uluru to the tradition owners, the Anangu People.

26: 2019 – ban on climbing Uluru comes into force.

28: 1834 – Battle of Pinjarra, WA.

LET US NOW MOVE INTO PRAYER WITH THE SACRED TEXTS

The readings are:

Jeremiah 31:7-9

Hebrews 5:1-6

Mark 10:46-52

***Lectio:* Read the First Reading from the Prophet Jeremiah, Ch. 31, verses 7-9.**

Read it in a reverent way. The Word of God is sacred. Let us give ourselves to the sacred text and open our hearts to the power of the Holy Spirit calling us forth to respond. Be aware of the Holy Spirit playing on the fibres of your heart as you read. This is the true “oratio” (prayer) of *Lectio Divina*.

***Meditatio:* A little background to the text, so that we understand it and can make an informed response to it.**

The purpose of this book is to record Jeremiah’s unsuccessful attempts to call Judah to repent of idolatry and immorality. The people of Judah don’t heed the prophet’s warnings and therefore are taken captive to Babylon. There are two sections. The first takes place before the fall of Jerusalem. The text we are given for prayer is part of this first section.

Jeremiah speaks about a new exodus, just as there was the former exodus out of Egypt. Part of his prediction is that a remnant will be saved.

Take time over the text before making your response to it in the days ahead.
I share mine in *Evangelizatio* 1.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 125

The response is: THE LORD HAS DONE GREAT THINGS FOR US;
WE ARE FILLED WITH JOY.

Psalm 125 is a psalm of the returned exiles – the perfect response to the first text.

Lectio: Read the Second text from the Letter to the Hebrews, chapter 5, verses 1-6.

Meditatio:

We saw last week and the week before that Christ is greater than the priesthood and of all older covenants. Christ has been given the glory of becoming High Priest by his Father. He is our High **Priest** who “lives within the limitations of weakness”. Jesus is our merciful High Priest, with the emphasis on merciful. He understands and so can present our needs to the Father. Read the text a number of times until the Holy Spirit pours unction on words, phrases or sentences and then note the response in your prayer journal.

Take time to ponder on this reading. This is done as we go on with each day’s work, or rest. *Lectio Divina* is a way of life. Once it becomes so, then we can ponder anywhere. Write your response to the text. I share my response in *Evangelizatio* 2.

The Gospel Verse is from 2 Timothy 1:10

OUR SAVIOUR CHRIST JESUS HAS DONE AWAY WITH DEATH,
AND BROUGHT US LIFE THROUGH HIS GOSPEL.

Lectio: Read the Gospel text from Mark 10:46-52.

Meditatio: A little background to the text so that we may gain an understanding and make an informed response.

Firstly, Jesus encounters Bartimaeus on the road leading out of Jericho, on his way to Jerusalem for his final Passover. We should be looking at the blind man’s appeal: that Jesus, as son of David, should show mercy to him. This was a recognition of Jesus’ ancestry back to King David and it was a recognition of Jesus’ messianic status. The blind beggar had faith, and because of this, he was healed. The following course of literary techniques comprises the text:

A plea: “Son of David, have pity on me.”

A command: “Call him here.”

A question: "What do you want me to do for you?"

An answer: "Master, let me see again."

It is a simple progression in a faith-filled encounter between the blind beggar and Jesus.

Take time every day for *Lectio Divina*: a line or word, or more. Allow the Holy Spirit to play on the fibres of your heart like a harpist in order to bring forth the most beautiful melody of your response to God. I share my response in *Evangelizatio* 3.

***Evangelizatio* is my LIVED RESPONSE to the sacred scriptures given to me each week by the Church for my formation as a Christian. If I don't respond, they are merely texts on a page. When I do respond, they are my life.**

1. My response to this first text is to the reality of idolatry and immorality. These are just as alive in our own times as they were in the time of Jeremiah (circa. 650 B.C.) The difference is that we will not be overcome by an enemy power and exiled to a foreign land. But, when I do idolize certain work situations or become an immovable force anywhere, then there is a smidgen of idolatry there, and I do isolate myself from others – do I put myself in exile? As for immorality, I don't see myself as immoral, but I do see the thirst for power and combat in today's world, an immoral one. Money for nuclear submarines instead of money for countries who can't feed their people. Nation sharing with nation? Not likely. And this is immoral. Pope Francis has been on to idolatry and immorality from the beginning of his pontificate. In "The Church of mercy, he speaks of demolishing the idols, the cult of the God of money and the culture of waste. Perhaps a read of his book again would steer us more deeply into a church of mercy.
2. What prompts a response in me is that Jesus is greater than the Old Testament priesthood and that Jesus is called by God to present our needs to God, the Most High. I am brought again to the notion of "solidarity". In that inspiring set of Stations of the Cross by two American monks, we come to station no. 5, (Simon helps Jesus), and the caption reads: *Quis stabit mecum?* (Who will stand with me?). If, when we are tearing our hair out with worry, collapsing on the floor with anxiety, living with what seems like an eternal migraine, or just numb from bad news – the one glimmer of hope is that Jesus knows all this and is standing with us. But it's easier said than done at the time.
3. I am responding to this Gospel text by looking at my own blindness. Am I happy to remain blind to the suffering of our world? Clement of Alexandria – circa 150-215 comments on this text as follows: "The commandment of the Lord shines clearly, enlightening the eyes. Receive Christ, receive power to see, receive your light, that you may plainly recognize both God and humanity. More delightful than gold and precious stones, more desirable than honey and the honeycomb is the Word that has enlightened us. Let us shake off forgetfulness of truth, shake off the mist of ignorance and darkness that dims our eyes, and contemplate the true God, after first raising this song of praise

to him: 'All hail, O Light!' For upon us buried in darkness, imprisoned in the shadow of death, a heavenly light has shone, a light of a clarity surpassing the sun's...That light is eternal life, and those who receive it live." This week, we can bring the Light of Christ to someone who is buried in darkness, imprisoned in the shadow of death; those in palliative care will be strengthened by the Christ-light which we bring. There is that beautiful small hymn we sing occasionally: "Will you let me be your servant, let me be as Christ to you? I will hold the Christ-light for you in the night-time of your fear." We don't have to look very far. Can we pay one visit to some other person and bring light, be light, speak light? We may only have to walk to the next door office or room to bring the Christ-light to another. Keep vigilant for the one who is silently crying while working in the office. He or she may be coming to terms with the emotional pain of the loss of a loving relationship, a miscarriage, rejection or unbearable hurt. You may be the Light that calls them to healing.

***Lectio Divina* is Holy Reading, that is, reading of the Sacred Scriptures. It is a way of life, not a method of prayer. It is about reading (and listening), reflecting, praying in tune with the Holy Spirit within me, resting in God, and responding in the way I live. May we imitate the Mother of God who pondered all things in her heart.**

*Lectio Divina is a way of life, not a method of prayer.
We read, we reflect on the text from an informed background.
We are aware of the Holy Spirit praying within us,
prompting us to respond to certain words or sentences.
We may be led to a time of stillness.
Last of all, we respond as true disciples of Jesus,
seeking to follow Him with pure hearts.
But even then, it is not over.
We are called to imitate the Mother of God,
who kept all sacred words and experiences in her heart.*

