

**LECTIO DIVINA (Holy Reading)**  
**PRAYING WITH THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.**

**Sunday 6 February 2022**

**5th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

**For those who pray the Liturgy of the Hours, the Psalter takes Week One**

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 & NZ Church.

**In the Liturgy:**

07: (New Zealand) St. Paul Miki and companions, martyrs (Memorial)

10: St. Scholastica

**In the Australian and New Zealand Church:**

06: Australia – Word of God Sunday

06: New Zealand – Waitangi Day

09: Armidale – Episcopal Ordination of the Most Rev. Michael Kennedy, 2012

10: Geraldton, Perth – Anniversary of the death of the Most Rev. William Joseph Foley, (1991)

11: World Day of Prayer for the Sick

**In the Social Justice Calendar:**

06: International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation

08: Australia – Establishment of the Woodward Royal Commission into land rights in the Northern Territory.

11: Safer Internet Day

11: International Day of Women and Girls in Science.

12: Christchurch – Anniversary of the dedication of the cathedral (1905).

**LET US NOW MOVE INTO PRAYER WITH THE SACRED TEXTS**

**The readings are:**

Isaiah 6:1-8

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Luke 5:1-11.

***Lectio:* Read the first reading from the Prophet Isaiah, chapter 6:1-8.**

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 we can immerse ourselves in it and make our response.**

The text is taken from First Isaiah. The setting is Judah in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC. This vision is dated to the year King Uzziah died, circa 740 B.C.

As it is written here, it is a description of the call of Isaiah. The mistake is to take the imagery as literal.

Opening it out, there is the image of God high and exalted, surrounded by the court of heaven, all in adoration of God.

Then Isaiah is aware of his own unworthiness as an individual and as a member of a wicked people. Because of Isaiah's profession of his unworthiness, there follows the ritual cleansing. Part of this cleansing is done with a burning coal. We are referred to Numbers 31:22 and following, Malachi 3:2 and Matthew 3:11 for examples of cleansing by fire. (Elliott Binns).

Take time to ponder on this text from Isaiah in the days ahead. May you 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 137

**The response is:** IN THE SIGHT OF THE ANGELS  
I WILL SING YOUR PRAISES LORD.

Psalm 137 is a prayer of thanksgiving to a faithful God.

***Lectio:*** Read the second text from 1 Corinthians 15:1-11.

***Meditatio:*** We could call this text: revision, revision, revision. Or: repetition, repetition, repetition. And of course, the point is just that. This is the way we are reminded of the gift of salvation that has been given to us. We hear the message over and over again. And even then, we suffer a lapse of memory. What Paul is dealing with here is both the resurrection of Jesus and the concluding matters he needs to add.

Let us remember also that Paul wrote this letter to the young church at Corinth, a church still struggling to live Christianity. There were divisions, immorality and lack of steadfastness.

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 Matt. 4:19.**

COME FOLLOW ME SAYS THE LORD  
AND I WILL MAKE YOU FISHERS OF MY PEOPLE.

***Lectio:*** Read the Gospel text: Luke 5:1-11.

***Meditatio:***

Luke 4:14 – Luke 9:50 presents Jesus, the Son of God, as having power over everything. Here, it is the fish of the sea. Those involved and those who witness it, know that it is a miracle.

And Simon Peter's spontaneous response is to fall down on his knees and acknowledge his sinfulness. It is one of those stories that, if you become bogged down in detail, it loses its power. Don't spoil it.

In the end, they bring in the boats, leave all and follow Jesus. Every calling to follow Jesus as a Christian is spontaneous. Usually, we don't look back. If we do look back, and weigh up the consequences, we probably wouldn't persevere.

Read the Gospel again take quiet time. 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. I'm responding to the purification of fire. There are many examples of the use of "fire" in the Sacred Scriptures. The first significant mention is the Exodus where God led the people to freedom, in a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. The Easter Vigil is a Vigil of light: Candles are lit and held high for the renewal of the baptismal promises. Another reference to fire is found in Isaiah 43:1&2. *Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned.* This is a reference of a different nature, but still uses the word "fire", referring to the most excruciating painful times of our lives – times when we feel the fire of fear, of illness, of demands on my time, of grief and terrible loss. I had a letter from an oblate recently. She is an exemplary person and was sharing her mother-in-law's last days before death. At almost 90 years old, her mother-in-law was still referring to her still-born daughter of long ago as "my little girl". How beautiful! and at the same time, how painful. All those years – all that love. A child lost and a purification by fire.
2. My response is by way of a reminder that, we begin a liturgical journey, beginning with the first Sunday of Advent, and we finish that journey on the last Sunday of the Church's year – the Solemnity of Jesus Christ, Universal King. Fr. Keating talks of the "the Mystery of Christ", saying that: "The whole panorama of the mysteries of Jesus' life is condensed in a single Eucharistic celebration. The liturgical year divides up all that is contained in that single explosion of divine light, life and love so that we can more easily assimilate the significance of these theological ideas by experiencing them one by one." The heart of it all is repetition, as St. Paul does over and over in his teaching. Fr. Keating continues: "In the Christmas-Epiphany season, the focus is on the theological idea of light. Easter: life. Pentecost: love. Each of these is communicated by means of a prolonged period of preparation leading up to the celebration of the principal feast. The Church's liturgy teaches by transmitting the knowledge it expounds...the Liturgical Year is an extraordinary production, addressing every level of our being at once and prodding our response."

3. The Gospel is a very vivid and beautiful story and was told to me for the first time when I was a child. My father took me to what was then Mt. Olivet Hospital in Brisbane to visit a Presentation Sister who had taught him when he was a child at Primary School. This beautiful elderly sister was dying. (That's what Mt. Olivet hospital was all about – people went there to die). She told me this story word for word, with drama and excitement and faith, as if she was there and witnessed it all. And – I've never forgotten it. It's as if I can hear her still describing the great catch of fish. Even though we have heard this story many times, try to listen to it again with the ear of our hearts and allow the wonderful images to engage us afresh.

*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.*



*The Great Catch of Fish by John August Swanson*