

**LECTIO DIVINA (Holy Reading)  
PRAYING WITH THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.  
Sunday 1 May 2022**

**Third Sunday of Easter Year C**

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

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:**

02: St. Athanasius (Memorial)  
03: Sts. Philip and James (Feast)

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

03: Australia – The Diocese of Townsville celebrates the Anniversary of the Episcopal Ordination of Bishop Timothy Harris (2017).

**In the Social Justice Calendar:**

01: International Workers Day.  
01: Australia – (1838), Massacre of up to 300 Aboriginal people at Slaughterhouse Creek, NSW.  
03: Australia (1990) – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission was established.  
03: World Press Freedom Day  
05: Australia – 2016. Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM Conv was appointed Bishop of Parramatta, the first Vietnamese-born Australian to be ordained a Bishop.  
06: Australia, 1992 – Introduction of mandatory detention of Asylum Seekers in Australia.  
07: World Password Day.

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

**The readings are:**

Acts of the Apostles 5:27-32, 40-41  
Revelation 5:11-14  
John 21:1-19.

**Lectio:** Read the First text from the Acts of the Apostles, Ch. 5, v's 27-32 and 40-41.

**Meditatio:** This text relates Peter's second discourse to the Sanhedrin, after he was brought before the High Priest for preaching. He was told not to preach! Richard Dillon, who wrote the Commentary on Acts, in the New Jerome Biblical Commentary has some important background on a speech/discourse: "The centerpiece of most of the great scenes [in Acts], is a speech, whether a mission sermon (Chapters 2 and 17), a prophetic indictment (Chapter 7), or an Apologia before public authority."

(NJBC 44:7). Peter's second discourse to the Sanhedrin illustrates Luke 21:13. Pause and read Luke 21:13.

At the end of the text from Acts, "the apostles emerge as models of fearless confession under persecution." (44:41).

Peter and the Apostles said: "Obedience to God comes before obedience to men; it was the God of our ancestors who raised up Jesus, but it was you who had him executed by hanging [him] on a tree."

Read the text again and maybe a third time. Read it slowly, marking some of the words, phrases, sentences which may cause you to stop and recognize that the Holy Spirit is calling you. Ponder for a while. Maybe a day or more! Make your response. I share my response in *Evangelizatio 1*.

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 29

**The response is:** I WILL PRAISE YOU LORD, FOR YOU HAVE RESCUED ME.

Psalm 29 is a thanksgiving prayer for recovery from sickness: "The Lord listened and had pity, the Lord came to my help, for you have changed my mourning into dancing; O Lord my God, I will thank you forever."

**Lectio:** Read the second text: Revelation 5:11-14.

**Meditatio:** Some background to help us understand the text and make an informed response.

5:11-14 are the last four verses of the longer unit 5:1-14 – the scroll and the Lamb. There is a very informative note in Adela Collin's commentary on the Book of Revelation. Of 5:11-14, she writes: "The acclamations of large numbers of beings of every class and the elders' act of prostration recall the honours given to the Roman Emperor. The offering of these honours to God and the Lamb rather than the Emperor, reflects John's vision of the conflict between the Rule of God and the Rule of Caesar." (NJBC 63:31).

Read the text over a couple of times. And you will hear the Holy Spirit prompting you to respond. I share my response to this reading in *Evangelizatio 2*.

**Gospel Acclamation**

CHRIST IS RISEN, THE LORD OF ALL CREATION;  
HE HAS SHOWN PITY ON ALL PEOPLE.

**Lectio:** Read the Gospel text: John 21:1-19.

**Meditatio:** Some background to the text to help us respond with understanding.

What does this text mean?

Let's begin with the number 153 (fish)

The symbolism is disputed. It may refer to the universality of the mission. "It is the Lord!" John the Evangelist has made the beloved disciple's recognition of the stranger on the shore the motive for Peter's action.

Jesus addresses the disciples with the Johannine community's self-designation - "children". Read 1 John 2:13, 18 and 1 John 3:7 for confirmation of this.

The narrator may have emphasized the fact that the net did not break, to point to the unity of those diverse believers in contrast to the divisions over Jesus that had occurred in the unbelieving crowd (61:239). Pause and read 7:43, 9:16 and 10:19.

This Gospel is a Resurrection appearance "in combination with the tradition that Jesus is recognized in a meal.

And what about Jesus' words to the Beloved Disciple and to Peter? (21:15-19).

At the Last Supper Peter's question about the betrayer was asked through John (John 13:23-25).

In this Gospel text the beloved disciple recognizes the Lord on the shore and thus provides the occasion for Peter to go to the Lord.

Peter's role as shepherd and martyr is established by the Risen Lord.

(Summarized from the New Jerome Biblical Commentary 61:241 and 242).

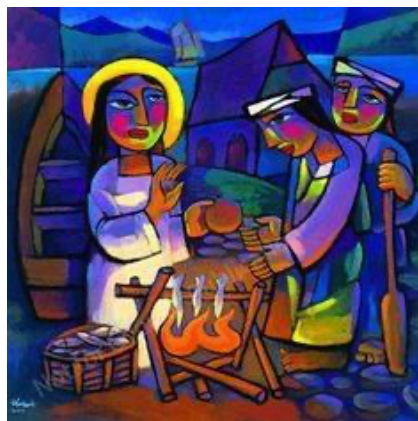
Read the Gospel a few times. Take time for quiet and listening to the Holy Spirit praying within you. After a while (day or days), make your response to this text. I share mine in *Evangelizatio* 3.

**EVANGELIZATIO: My lived response to the texts with which the Church exhorts me to pray. 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: Many heroes and heroines, acting in the name of God have delivered fearless speeches while under persecution. What comes to mind are the Cistercian martyrs of Rwanda. "Of Gods and Men" is the title of the film which recounts their story. Martin Luther King Junior spoke out against racial hatred and segregation (black people had to sit at the back of the bus, away from white people). These fearless speeches had the long-term effect of freedom for African Americans. If you watched Monty Don's American Gardens, you will have been confronted with truths such as how many Negro slaves were owned by some men, and how many slaves built some of the gardens. The fearless witness of Sr. Joan Chittister has led to more recognition of the role of women in the Catholic Church. St. Oscar Romero, because of his fearless and outspoken truth was assassinated while he was celebrating Mass. There has been no shortage of brave Christians who have challenged the establishment. What about me? Sometimes I'm so fearful I won't even disagree with another person, even though I know that what they are saying is wrong, judgmental, and prejudiced. Thomas Merton said: "If a writer is so cautious that s/he never writes anything that cannot be criticized, that same writer will never write anything that can be read. If you want to help other people, you have to write things that some people will condemn."

2. My response: Sometimes we don't experience conflict between the rule of God and the rules of Government. But many of us do experience conflict in our own hearts and have little faith in a government which allows our Indigenous people, the first Nations of our land, to be dispossessed of their land in some areas of Australia. I have communicated with a woman of Lismore who has written her story for the Enquiry. It is a tragic story about waiting for the SES to rescue her family. Mainly it was people with boats who rescued their neighbours. The SES contacted her 72 hours after her phone call! Her story isn't the only one, and many families have not much faith in a government which allowed the Lismore floods to escalate as they did, without providing more rescue agents.
  
3. My response is to the simple "breakfast on the beach", as one of the Resurrection appearances. We've recently had our Easter break, and as Australians we probably had at least one breakfast by the beach or the lake or river. It's a simple outing, which bears life-long positive memories for those who do it. The memories are of unity, love, sharing, up-building and beauty. As I write here in my Lectio Divina Journal, I recall my mother taking us to Pottsville, across the border from Queensland, or to the Tweed River, for a barbecue breakfast. It was about bringing family together over a meal and sharing our joy. Today I had an email from a friend whose sister has recently died. My friend told me that it was this particular sister who is remembered for the way she brought the family together.

*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,  
the one who pondered the Word of God in her heart  
and brought forth the Word made Flesh, our Saviour Jesus Christ.*



*Come and have breakfast by He Qi*