

**LECTIO DIVINA (Holy Reading)**  
**PRAYING WITH THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.**  
**Sunday 12 June 2022**  
**Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity, Year C**  
**For those who pray the Liturgy of the Hours, the Psalter takes Week Three**

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

**In the Liturgy:**

13: St. Anthony of Padua (Memorial).

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

15: Maitland-Newcastle – Episcopal Ordination of the Most Rev. William Wright, 2011.

Perth: Episcopal Ordination of the Most Rev. Timothy Costelloe SDB, 2007.

**In the Social Justice Calendar:**

12: World Day Against Child Labour

14: Beginning of Refugee Week

15: World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

17: World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought.

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

**The readings are:**

Proverbs 8:22-31

Romans 5:1-5

John 16:12-15

**Lectio:** Read the First Reading from the Book of Proverbs, chapter 8, verses 22-31.

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 Book of Proverbs is part of the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament. We have it in our bibles as a collection of wise sayings, rules for right living, and reverence for the Wisdom of God, rather than the wisdom of humanity. This text is about the origins of Wisdom and her function in creation. There is a good deal of scholarly criticism about this passage – but it really isn’t necessary for *Lectio Divina*. The passage asserts simply that Wisdom was begotten by God prior to creation. Christian theology identifies Wisdom with Christ (1 Cor. 1:24 & 30; Col. 2: 2 ff.)

Expressing this text differently, we are listening to Wisdom tell of her superiority over all things due to her origin before them. Wisdom assumes a person, and so we speak of the personification of wisdom.

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

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 8

**The response is:** O LORD OUR GOD,  
HOW WONDERFUL IS YOUR NAME IN ALL THE EARTH.

The Grail Psalter says that Psalm 8 is a “lyrical reflection on the making and endowment of humanity. Human beings are little less than gods because they have a share in God’s dominion.”

**Lectio:** Read the second text from Romans 5:1-5.

**Meditatio:** The theme of the Letter to the Romans is found in this text. Everyone is a sinner and needs God’s salvation. God sent his Son Jesus to be our Saviour – to save us from sin. Those who trust Christ Jesus as Saviour have their sins forgiven and enjoy eternal life with God.

Chapters 5-8 of Romans speaks of peace and power through grace and the Spirit. Into the text we are given comes the statement: “we can boast about our sufferings.” Then an exposition of what Paul means: “These sufferings bring patience, as we know, and patience brings perseverance, and perseverance brings hope, and this hope is not deceptive, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.” And so, we are engaged in a text which speaks of God, God’s Son and the Holy Spirit: TRINITY. Chapter five, 1-5, is part of a long unit: 5:1-11, and summing up, it is an exhortation to cultivate interior peace, based on the certitude of redemption. Verse 1 can be understood to mean that the discussion of justification and the entrance to the Christian life is over and that a new exposition is beginning. This gives the text a new energy.

Stay with the peace, grace and promise of this text, pray deeply over it and make your response. I make mine in *Evangelizatio* 2.

**The Gospel Verse is from Apocalypse 1:8**

GLORY TO THE FATHER, THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT:  
TO GOD WHO IS, WHO WAS, AND WHO IS TO COME.

**Lectio:** Read the Gospel text from John 16:12-15.

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

Fr. Karl Rahner says of the first fifteen verses of chapter 16, that they are about “the Holy Spirit and the work of the Holy Spirit.” (The Great Church Year, 220). Here too, we have the presence of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is referred to as “the Spirit of truth” and the Spirit’s mission will be to lead Christians to the complete truth.

We can move now to some texts from John which speak of the truth of God. Take a highlighter and mark them, or alternatively write them in your prayer journal: John 4:18; John 5:31, 32; 6:55; 8:13, 14, 17. John 10:41; 19:35; 21:24; 1 John 2:8, 27; 3 John 12. John 18:37 & 38. (Pilate asks Jesus: “What is truth?”

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 is to wisdom generally. If you watch ABC iView, there are “Shorts”, anywhere from 4 mins to 16 mins. One of them is simply called “Elders”. Two Indigenous men, - grandfathers, take their grandson (aged about 11), into the bush and teach him how “not to get lost”, as well as the wonders of creation. The first thing they do is give him a large feather, splendidly coloured with black, crimson, orange, yellow – the feather of a huge cockatoo. As they walk, one of them stops at a bush and turns down a piece at the end of a small branch, all the time watching the boy and telling him to watch. After a while they lose him because he is an 11-year-old boy and wants to play. He loses the feather, plays in the dirt, sits on a huge log over a water hole. When the water hole moves and indicates that a sizable creature is there, he jumps down and runs. He is frightened. Eventually, he finds the feather he lost so he knows vaguely where he is. Then a bit later he finds the end of the branch with the broken twig, a signal that he is still on the right track. He is a little concerned but keeps on going. Eventually, he comes across his two grandfathers sitting by a fire waiting for him. He is very happy. They are very happy that he has passed the test! Their wisdom has paid off.
2. My response is to visit one of the Homilies of Pope Francis: May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2014. “Life sometimes wounds us.” *The road to Emmaus becomes a symbol of our journey of faith: the Scriptures and the Eucharist are the indispensable elements for encountering the Lord. We too, often go to Sunday Mass with our worries, difficulties, and disappointments...Life sometimes wounds us, and we go away feeling sad, toward our Emmaus, turning our backs on God’s plan. We distance ourselves from God.* This is what we do when life wounds us and we suffer. St. Paul says that sufferings bring patience, patience brings perseverance, and perseverance brings hope. And this hope is not deceptive. My experience of suffering is that I needed help from others to get through it and come out the other side. Pope Francis says that the wounds of Christ today [the sufferings of Christ] are to be found in the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the humiliated, slaves, prisoners and those in hospitals, [the terminally ill]. There is suffering everywhere. A friend said to me

recently: “I’d rather have cancer than to live in this depression, this suffering inside me.” My mother said the same thing when she was dying: “I’d rather have this cancer than suffering of the mind.” Mental suffering and anguish of mind is a terrible suffering. With other illnesses they manifest themselves outwardly. Mental suffering is the kind of suffering others can’t see, and very few people understand it and are patient with it. Let us pray for the suffering people of the Ukraine and Russia – all who are in the way of this terrible and senseless war.

3. My response is to the word “truth”. W.E. Vine says that this word as used in John 18:37 & 38, has an absolute force. It is truth of God in all its fullness and scope as embodied in Jesus. Jesus was the perfect expression of the truth, of sincerity and integrity of character. The gospel incident which speaks of truth loudly to me, is that of the woman taken in adultery. She is to be stoned according to the law and is brought before Jesus (John 8:1-11). “Let those of you who are free of sin cast the first stone.” Of course, no one could, because they were all sinners in one way or another. And they were all men. It takes two to commit adultery. However, in the patriarchal society of that time, only the woman was the sinner. Jesus, the ‘truth’ of God, spoke only words of love and mercy. “Has no one condemned you? Neither do I condemn you. Go, and do not sin again.” The truth of God is not judgmental, scornful, condemnatory, or punitive. On the contrary, the truth of God is love and forgiveness, compassion and kindness. We have a lot to learn from this story and from so many stories in the Gospel.

*Lectio divina is a way of life, not a method of prayer.*

*We read the text from the sacred scriptures.*

*We take time to understand the text by way of a commentary.*

*We respond to the text and listen to the prayer of the Holy Spirit within us.*

*Such a response is taking place from the beginning of our prayer.*

*The Spirit will place unction on the word/words we are meant to hear.*

*Like the Mother of God, we treasure all this in our hearts.*

