

LECTIO DIVINA (Holy Reading)
PRAYING WITH THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.
Sunday 26 June 2022
13th 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:

28: St. Irenaeus (Memorial)

29: Sts. Peter and Paul (Solemnity)

In the Australian and New Zealand Church:

26: Bathurst – Episcopal ordination of the Most Rev. Michael McKenna (2009)

27: Maitland-Newcastle & Wilcannia-Forbes: Patronal Feast, Our Lady of Perpetual Help

28: Geraldton – Episcopal Ordination of the Most Rev. Michael Morrissey (2017)

29: Bathurst: Anniversary of the dedication of the Cathedral (1865).

In the Social Justice Calendar:

26: International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

30: World Social Media Day. Also: On this day in 1945, Unemployment Benefits were introduced in Australia.

July 1: 2012- Commencement of the Fair Work Amendment Act ensuring fair pay and conditions for outworkers in the garment industry.

July 2: 1971 - Yvonne Goolagong Crawley won Wimbledon

2016 - Election of Linda Burney – the first Aboriginal woman member of the Australian Parliament.

LET US NOW MOVE INTO PRAYER WITH THE SACRED TEXTS

The readings are:

1 Kings 19:16, 19-21

Galatians 5:1, 13-18

Gospel: Luke 9:51-62.

Lectio: Read the first text from 1 Kings 19:16, 19-21.

Be aware of the way you handle your bible. Take it up reverently and read the sacred text with deep awareness. This text is given to all of us on this particular Sunday for our formation as Christians. Think of the Sacred Scriptures as a school from which we never graduate. We are learners until the close of our lives on earth.

Meditatio: Some notes on the background of this text may help us to both understand it and make a response to it.

Some major themes: immediate response and non-immediate response. Elijah responds immediately to God's command. He doesn't seem to express jealousy that

the Lord is replacing him with Elisha. Elijah, it seems, expected the same obedience from Elisha. But Elisha was concerned with bringing closure to this part of his life: "Let me kiss my father and mother. Then I will follow you." Elijah loses patience with Elisha. Elisha turns away, takes the two oxen and slaughters them, uses the wooden plough for a barbecue, cooks the meat and gives it to his workers. Only after this does he get up, follow Elijah and become his servant. The call of Elisha concerns a mantle. The mantle which symbolizes a covering or epiphany (manifestation) is thrown over Elisha and brought with it the gift of his master's spirit (Cf 2 Kings 2:13 & 14). The vocation is to prophecy. Prophecy is the voice of one who speaks on behalf of the Lord – one who speaks with integrity because their speech is grounded in the Gospel.

Read the text again a couple of times. Stay with the text. Ponder on it for a day or more. However, if you are aware of the Holy Spirit calling forth your response to the text, note it down. I share my response in *Evangelizatio 1*.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 15

The response is: YOU ARE MY INHERITANCE O LORD.

Psalm 15 a prayer of confidence in the Lord. "Preserve me God I take refuge in you. I say to the Lord: 'You are my God. My happiness lies in you alone.'"

Lectio: Read the second text, from Galatians 5:1, and 13-18.

Meditatio: Brief background to the text or brief explanation of the text, so that we can understand it and respond. We can open out the text as follows:

1. We are called to liberty.
2. Be careful. This wonderful gift of liberty can provide an opening for self-indulgence.
3. Serve one another in works of love.
4. "The whole of the Law is summed up in one single command - 'Love your neighbor as yourself'".
5. If you are guided by the Spirit, you will be in no danger of yielding to self-indulgence.

Another approach could be:

It is a warning to the people of Galatia to 'walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit'. Paul's admonition illustrates the love of which he spoke in 5:6. Paul is concerned that Christians should not make their freedom an incentive for earthly, material, Godless conduct. Their freedom must rather be one of service of love, a freedom for others. (The New Jer. Bib. Comm., 47:30).

Take time to ponder on what Christ Jesus has done for us, not collectively, but personally. 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 Cf. 1 Samuel 3:9 and John 6:68

SPEAK O LORD, YOUR SERVANT IS LISTENING.

YOU HAVE THE WORDS OF EVERLASTING LIFE.

How faith-filled is the person who can address the Lord like this!

Lectio: Read the Gospel text from Luke 9: 51-62.

Meditatio: Jerusalem the Holy City, and the place of Christ's Passion death and resurrection. Jesus is making for Jerusalem. We have two issues here:

The first is the non-relationship between Samaritans and Jews.

The second is the hardest: the cost of discipleship.

Whether we like it or not, God asks nothing less than everything.

Let's look at Jerusalem.

And let's look at the way medieval writers interpreted scripture. First of all, it was due to St. **John Cassian*** that they did so.

For example, the City of Jerusalem:

Historically: the city of the Jews

Allegorically: the Church of Christ. (symbolically or metaphorically).

Anagogically: the heavenly city of God which is the mother of us all. (Metaphorically or symbolically)

Tropologically: (a method of interpreting the moral teaching of the bible through its use of figurative language) Jerusalem is understood as the human soul, which frequently under this title is either praised or blamed by the Lord.

*St. John Cassian lived from 360-430. He received his religious upbringing in a monastery at Bethlehem and then lived for ten years with Egyptian monks. Once ordained a priest, he founded a community for men and women at Marseilles. His writings greatly influenced the development of the monastic life in Europe.

Take time to ponder on the Gospel and allow the Spirit to place unction on the words which touch your heart. I make my response 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. If I were to name some of today's prophetic voices, I would name the Australians of the Year 2022, chosen by the Governor General David Hurley, to have a zoom meeting with Queen Elizabeth. They all spoke prophetically, in that they addressed current issues affecting Australians in a negative and destructive way. Dr. Daniel Nour has established "Street Side Medics", a mobile medical service that provides GP-led medical access to those who are experiencing homelessness and those who are vulnerable. To some of us it may seem like a first-class humanitarian work, but to those of us who are Christian it is surely the love of the poor and homeless who has stirred Dr. Nour to this profound service. A woman called Shanna Whan has set up a Charity called Sober in the Country, raising awareness around alcohol harm in rural and remote areas, where the

barriers of permanent isolation never end. She shared her own battle with alcohol. As she addresses this reality, she seems to have entered right inside the loneliness of people on the land. Of course, things are going to get worse for farmers. With fresh beans at \$24.99 a kilo, will anyone buy the crops grown by our farmers? We need to commend them to prayer and trust in God to work miracles.

2. The Commentary on Galatians just cited, uses the word “conduct”, as in “living in the Spirit” means to conduct oneself by the life of the Spirit. The word “conduct” is an old-fashioned word in the English language and in Christian language. It was a word which was used in Christian Schools in the 19th and 20th centuries, but I am not sure of the 21st century. A comparison could be made between a Christian conducting oneself in thought, word and action, and a conductor of a symphony orchestra. Fr. Michael Casey always quotes Herbert von Karajan, who says that anyone wanting to play in a symphony orchestra, must know the music and be able to play in time with the other members of the orchestra. I suspect that there are other factors needed too: to concentrate on the conductor and be alert to what is happening. Another reality: “The Holy Spirit proceeds from the heart of God, with a longing to kindle in my own heart that same flame which burns in his. And this is why we are able to CONDUCT ourselves according to the Spirit. (A Carthusian Miscellany, page 83).
3. My response is to the Jerusalem which is my heart (the word used by the Monastic fathers such as Cassian is “soul”). I prefer “heart”. When Jesus looks for a home in my heart, will he find a lack of love for others or the same flame that burns in his heart?

*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 and praying
in tune with the Holy Spirit within me,
resting in God and responding in the way I live.*



*“Come Follow Me”
Image by Susan Daily ibvm*