

**LECTIO DIVINA (Holy Reading)**  
**PRAYING WITH THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.**  
**Sunday 13 November 2022**  
**33<sup>rd</sup> 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 Australian & NZ Church and the Social Justice Calendar.

**In the Liturgy:**

17: St. Elizabeth of Hungary (Memorial)

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

15: Australia – Wilcannia-Forbes. Anniversary of the death of the Most Rev. Barry Collins, 2000.

19: Australia – Ballarat. Anniversary of the dedication of the cathedral in 1891.

19: Australia – Sale. Anniversary of the death of the Most Rev. Jeremiah Coffey 2014.

**In the Social Justice Calendar:**

13: World Day of the Poor.

14: World Diabetes Day

16: International Day for Tolerance

On this Day in 1989 six Jesuit Priests and two co-workers were murdered in El Salvador.

19: World Toilet Day – a day to reflect on the lack of sanitation in some developing countries, in prisons and basements where Ukrainians have been held by Russia, in some Detention Centres, and public toilets which are the only ones homeless persons can use. Pope Francis had toilets and running water put inside St Peter's Square to cater for the homeless

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

**The readings are:**

Malachi 3:19-20

2 Thess 3:7-12

Luke 21:5-19

**Lectio:** Read the first text from Malachi, chapter 3, verses 19-20.

Read it slowly. Be aware of the Holy Spirit placing unction on the message of this text. When your heart responds to a word or a line, or a phrase, this is the Holy Spirit touching your heart and calling forth your response.

**Meditatio:** A little background to the text will help us understand it and make a response to it.

Malachi in Hebrew means 'my messenger'. He is the last of the Old Testament prophets. Paul Gardner notes that Malachi's concerns centre on religious and social improprieties which appear to have permeated the life of the post-exilic Jewish

community of Jerusalem and Judah. The Temple had been completed a half century before the likely date of Malachi's ministry and yet already its priests were corrupting its services and profiting from their sacred offices. Gardner quotes Eugene Merrill, Professor of Old Testament Studies, Dallas Theological Seminary, as saying that "the burden of the book of Malachi was the glaring incongruity between the identity of the Jewish community as the people of God and the living out of all that this required of them. Theirs was not the problem of rebuilding the Temple and holy city, for that had long been done by Malachi's day; rather, it was the issue of holy living and holy service in the aftermath of all the external accomplishments. Malachi speaks to the modern world about the need to bring performance into line with profession. His message therefore is current, especially in light of the coming of the One of whom the prophet so eloquently spoke."

Read the text again and spend time with it as you go about your work and leisure. If you have the time in your week, take your reflection to a seat where you can watch the ocean, the lake, the river, the mountains, your own garden. Just take time to respond. I share my response to this reading in *Evangelizatio 1*.

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 97

**The response is:** THE LORD COMES TO RULE THE EARTH WITH JUSTICE.

This psalm is noted in the Grail Psalter as "an orchestra of praise to God, king of the world. Our Lord founded the kingdom of God on earth; and yet we pray, 'Thy kingdom come'; the work of our redemption has been accomplished, but we still pray for this salvation to be perfected throughout the world: God has come; but we look for his final coming, to take possession of his kingdom."

**Lectio:** Read the Second Mass Reading: 2 Thessalonians 3:7-12.

**Meditatio:** A little background to help us understand the text and respond to it.

We could label this text: a tribute to work and its reward.

Paul speaks of "no work", "no food". He abominates "idleness".

And worse than that, are the idle persons who interfere in the work of others.

There is no hidden meaning in this text. We work, therefore we eat. We work, and therefore we are not idle, or meddling in the work of others.

Take time to meditate on this text and make your response in the days ahead.

I share mine in *Evangelizatio 2*.

**The Gospel Verse is from Luke 21:38.**

LIFT UP YOUR HEADS AND SEE;

YOUR REDEMPTION IS NEAR AT HAND.

Redemption is always near at hand, taking place every time we make a choice for Christ.

**Lectio:** Now read the Gospel text from Luke 21:5-19.

**Meditatio:** Some background to the text which will help us respond.

Luke 21:5-19 is part of a very long text: 21:5-38. In verses 5-6, “the Lucan Jesus looks back on the destruction of the Temple. In what follows, the horizon will broaden to include Jerusalem (vv. 20-24) and the end of the world (25-33).

Vs. 12: Jesus who had met controversy throughout his ministry and especially in Jerusalem now predicts the same treatment for his disciples.

Vs. 19: Jesus exhorts his disciples to perseverance amid duress.

(Summarized from the New Jerome Biblical Commentary 43:175).

Stand back and ponder on the text – every aspect of it – over a few days. Listen to the Holy Spirit praying within you. This is the true *oratio* of *Lectio Divina*. Allow your spirit to rest and be still. Finally, make your response to the text and keep it in your prayer journal, and in your heart. I share my response in *Evangelizatio* 3.

**EVANGELIZATIO – this is one’s lived response to the texts given us by the Church each Sunday. It is about the evangelization of the “self” and pins me down to be who I am: A Christian who prays with the Word of God and responds to the call of the Word of God in my everyday life.**

1. My response is to the words of Eugene Merrill, Professor of Old Testament Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary. He said that “the burden of the book of Malachi was the glaring incongruity between the identity of the Jewish community as the people of God and the living out of all that this required of them. Theirs was...the issue of holy living and holy service in the aftermath of all the external accomplishments. Malachi...speaks to the modern world about the need to bring performance into line with profession.” So, who do we profess to be? Christian, followers of Jesus Christ, those who understand the work of a Christian. Then we need to live out in a practical way all that this means. I believe it is summed up fully in the Gospel of Luke, chapter 6:37 & 38: “Judge not and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you, good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For the measure you give will be the measure you get back.” To read the whole of chapter 6 is best. There we have it! Everything we need to know and do as a Christian.
2. Have we ever known lazy people? How did we feel about them? Have we ever known those who won’t work but turn up at dinner time? My grandfather could not tolerate anyone who would not work out of laziness. No matter how many jobs he got for one member of my family, that person would never turn up to start the work that had been found for him. He was not impressed! I had a friend who wanted her doctor to draft a letter saying that she cannot work. Instead, the doctor told her that she had patients in wheelchairs who had to work and wanted to work. I notice in “Silent Witness” and some episodes of “Vera”, that

women in wheelchairs work in the Incident Room. This is a wonderful witness. The Invictus Games also give a great witness of the many talents, skills and passion for work and living of those who are disabled. Paul is hard on the Thessalonians: if they don't work, they should not receive food. When I was a child and then a teenager, I noticed that every Friday evening, my father came home from work and put his wages on top of the refrigerator. My mother later gave him money for petrol and cigarettes. She had the rest to budget for food and whatever else was needed for the family. We in turn, helped our father with the lawns and gardens and our mother with the housework. There were six of us, and it was hard going for my parents at times.

3. For me, "perseverance amid duress" calls for a response. I'm not very good in situations of duress. In fact, the word "stress" is the word I use, instead of "duress". I am particularly not very good when the media hype up the bush fire news and show the same segments over and over, all day and through the night. There was just as much stress in the Lismore floods, but less hype! A friend of mine rang the SES because her husband was on the roof of their house, with "Hunter" the family dog. It was 72 hours before a reply came through. We all saw and heard about the stories of people coming to the aid of their neighbours with boats. My friend's husband made it through thanks to one of these rescues. There were so many instances of people coming together to pray and to serve.

*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.*



**This Sunday is World Day of the Poor.**

**This inspiring icon by Kelly Latimore depicts Dorothy Day who gave her life in service of the poor welcoming refugees to the Mary Hall Catholic Worker House.**