

LECTIO DIVINA (Holy Reading)
PRAYING WITH THE SACRED SCRIPTURES
Sunday 14 January 2024
2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B.

For those who pray the Liturgy of the Hours the Psalter takes Week Two

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

In the Liturgy:

17: St. Anthony (Memorial)

In the Australian and New Zealand Church:

14: New Zealand- Anniversary of the First Mass in 1838, by Bishop Pompallier.

17: Adelaide, Wollongong – Anniversary of the death of the Most Rev. Philip Wilson, 2021

20: Auckland – Anniversary of the death of the Most Rev. John Mackey, 2014

In the Social Justice Calendar:

15: Birth of Martin Luther King Junior. While we all know him, the Social Justice calendar gives an accurate description in a few words; “Inspired by his Christian faith, he was a prophetic witness to justice in the face of systemic racial discrimination.”

LET US NOW MOVE INTO PRAYER WITH THE SACRED TEXTS

The readings are:

1 Samuel 3:3-10

1 Corinthians 6:13-15, 17-20

John 1:35-42.

Lectio: Read the first text from the First Book of Samuel, chapter three, verses 3-10. As always, it is best to read the Word of God 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.

The history books of the Old Testament are Joshua, Judges, Ruth, First Samuel, Second Samuel, First Kings, Second Kings, First Chronicles, Second Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. Our text is part of 1 Samuel.

1 Samuel, as a history book, records the history of Israel from the birth of Samuel, who was the last judge, to the death of Saul, the first king, and the anointing of his successor, David. There is a verse in 1 Samuel which says: *Speak Lord, your servant is listening.* The event described in the text for this Sunday can be dated to 1100 BC.

The story is clear, the call is clear, and Samuel's response is clear. It can be our response also, when we hear the Lord calling us to respond to Him: Yes Lord, speak, for I am listening.

Make your response in the days ahead. I share mine in *Evangelizatio 1*.

Remember also: Lectio Divina is a way of life – allow God's word to travel with you.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 39

The response is: HERE AM I LORD, I COME TO DO YOUR WILL.

Psalm 39 is a prayer of thanksgiving for help received and a further plea for more help. There is a strong connection here between Samuel's words, and Christ's words in the Letter to the Hebrews. The Grail Psalter says that "It is not improbable that the Epistle to the Hebrews has those in mind who had served as priests in the now ruined temple: in place of their sacrifices which God no longer asked for, stands the free and perfect offering that is Christ himself who, like Isaiah before him said 'Here I am! Send me.' (Is. 6:1-13)." (Grail Psalter, 1973 Edition, page 78).

Lectio: Read the Second Reading, from the First Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians, chapter 6, verses 13-15 and 17-20.

Read the text once, then read it a second time. When a word or phrase or a whole sentence grabs hold of you, that is the Holy Spirit anointing those words which are being spoken to you. They will challenge you.

Meditatio: A brief explanation to help us understand this text.

The full text is 6:12-20. The "theme of sexual license in the vice list brings Paul back to the type of problem dealt with in chapter 5, verses 1-8."

Go back and read that part of chapter 5. Can you see the connection between 5:1-8 and 6:12-20?

Verse 19 is important. It tells us that the holiness of the community (3:16-17), must be reflected in the comportment of each member. (Cf. New Jerome Biblical Commentary, 49:32).

Make your response to this text during the coming week.

I share mine in *Evangelizatio 2*.

Gospel Verse: John 1:41, 17.

WE HAVE FOUND THE MESSIAH: JESUS CHRIST, WHO BRINGS US TRUTH AND GRACE.

Lectio: Read the Gospel for today: John 1:35-42.

Meditatio: One of the commentaries on this Sunday's Gospel is by Basil of Seleucia. He says: "Spurred on by the testimony of John the Baptist, the...apostle Andrew left his teacher and ran to the one pointed out by him. John's words were his signal, and moving more swiftly than John could speak, he approached the master with obvious longing. Both had left the **lamp** to come to the **sun**. Andrew was the first to become

an apostle. It was he who opened the gates of Christ's teaching. He was the first to gather the fruits cultivated by the prophets, and he surpassed the hopes of all by being the first to embrace the one awaited by all. He listened to John who cried out: 'Behold the Lamb of God' and of his own accord he went to the one pointed out to him. Having recognized the prophet foretold by the prophets, Andrew led his brother to the one he had found. To Peter, who was still in ignorance, he revealed the treasure: 'We have found the Messiah' for whom we were longing.

Listen for the message you are to hear in this Gospel text, and be still, as you receive the visitation of God into your life through God's Sacred Word. When you feel called to do so, make your response to the text. I share mine 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. In my family home when I was growing up, we had a picture of the boy Samuel in our hallway. Probably a number of us had one. It was a picture that drew me into prayer and took a hold of me at a young age. I suppose that makes sense, when we know for sure that Samuel was given to God by his mother Hannah, who brought him to the Temple to live as a Child of God. He was only a child. We've just finished the Season of Advent, and Christmastide – the season given to a Divine Child. A couple of weeks ago, a family was at morning Mass. There was a little boy of 2 or 3, and a baby girl still in her mother's arms. After Mass, Fr. Wayne took the little boy over to the nativity scene and asked him to name the animals he could see. Instead of doing that, he said: "Well, the giraffe is the tallest of all animals and it's not there!" Fr. Wayne then said to us: "There's a challenge for next year. Get a giraffe." While Samuel was given to God, he was still a child, and he must have done things children do. He probably pestered Eli, trying to help him, talking all the time. That's what little children do. They love talking once they've learnt how to talk. And in the New Testament Jesus says: "Let the little children come to me." And Jesus expects us to trust in God, like little children trust in their elders.
2. The words I am responding to are: "You are not your own property. You have been bought and paid for. That is why you should use your body for the glory of God." Are my words, my actions, my thoughts and intentions for the glory of God?
3. I love the commentary on this Gospel. Andrew and John (the Evangelist) ran swiftly to the sun (Jesus), having left the lamp (John the Baptist) behind. I am helped by this, to know that I must leave a lamp, or lamps behind and run to Jesus, the Son of God and the Sun of my life. First of all though I have to recognize the lamps, the things that draw me in a direction other than that of the Son of God. And this requires honesty. Will I be honest enough this week to enter the many "lamps" in my journal?

*Lectio Divina is a way of life,
carrying the Word of God within you as you work or take leisure.
It begins with reading the word,
seeking to understand what you have read,
listening to the Holy Spirit praying within you,
allowing God to lead you into Divine rest,
and responding in action to what you have read and prayed over.*

