

## 12th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

For those who pray the Liturgy of the Hours the Psalter takes Week Four.

The readings from the sacred texts this week are:

**Jeremiah 20:10-13 Romans 5:12-15 Matthew 10:26-33.**

Lectio: Read the first text from **Jeremiah 20:10-13.**

Meditatio: Some background from Sr Hildegard's previous writings can inform our understanding so that we can understand the text and can make our response. According to Sr Hildegard, "*Jeremiah engaged in prophetic ministry for over 40 years. He was called by the Lord to this ministry. He was unpopular because he condemned openly the injustice and the idolatry of the nation Israel and warned against false security. Jeremiah was opposed by kings, government officials, and the common people. This kind of message which attacked the security of the nation was always unpopular, whoever the prophet was.*"

Evangelizio: Jeremiah's human despair is evident in his cry to God to "let me see the vengeance you will take on them" which is not uncommon in the Old Testament writings. The New Testament brings new and refreshing light to the need for revenge, instead, leaving it all to the mercy of God, and wishing or at least trying to wish, the best for enemies as well as loved ones. We can feel the despair of Jeremiah and give thanks for his determination and trust in God.

The Responsorial Psalm: **Psalm 68 - LORD, IN YOUR GREAT LOVE, ANSWER ME.**

Sr Hildegard writes that this psalm is "*a cry from the depths of sorrow*". *Save me, O God, for the waters have risen to my neck. Sr Hildegard reflects that "We have all been there".*

Evangelizio:

We have indeed all "been there" at different times in our lives. For Christians, the trials of life do not disappear but living events in the light of faith often changes our perspective. Sometimes we have to wait patiently, like all good learners, to understand God's plan as it is to be revealed in our lives and circumstances. When we need help, we only have to reach out, and God is listening. A wise religious Brother once advised a seeker to pray for the grace to accept the will of God and whatever will happen in future, especially when things get tough. Even when we don't understand and feel overwhelmed by life, God listens to our cries from the depths of sorrow and, in time, will bring peace to our situations.

Lectio: Read **St Paul's Letter to the Romans 5:12-15.**

Meditatio: Again, some background from Sr Hildegard helps us understand the text and respond to it. Sr Hildegard writes:

*"Simply speaking, it (the reading) is about two men: Adam is the first, Jesus is the second. Adam sinned and so sin and death entered into the human race. The point of the text is to focus on the one and only man, Jesus the Christ who "came to us as an abundant free gift." Jesus, the second man laid down his life for humanity, and by his death on the cross, destroyed both sin and death, brought into the world by the first man."*

Evangelizio:

The free gift of Christ is something that we all have access to, yet sometimes forget to access, and in our humanity, we can tend to rely solely on ourselves, somewhat destroying our human spirit in the process. The mercy, compassion and sacrifice of Jesus destroyed both sin and death. His free gift of mercy can always be tapped into by engaging with the sacraments as well as prayer and holy reading. This gift is life-enhancing and nurtures our souls.

### **Gospel (Matthew 10:26-33)**

Lectio: For the gospel reflection, I rely on the theological wisdom of Sr Veronica Lawson (RSM PhD) in her online gospel reflection for the 12th Sunday in Year A (Matthew 10:26-33). <https://a.storyblok.com/f/45074/x/65741d6250/reflection-on-the-gospel-of-12a-vl-210620.pdf>. Sr Veronica is an Australian Sister of Mercy who is a leading biblical scholar and her weekly reflections on the gospel now have a global audience. She is a gifted teacher and advocate for refugees.

Meditatio: According to Sr Veronica, *“Trust in God is at the heart of Jesus’ response to suffering”* as explained in this gospel this week. She writes: *“The disciples are sent to proclaim in the marketplace or from the “housetops” the gospel they have received in the security of the household. If they proclaim the gospel and acknowledge Jesus, he will in turn “acknowledge” them before God “in heaven”. They can expect rejection and humiliation. This is not to deter them from their mission. They are not to give up the struggle or capitulate in the face of persecution. Like all of God’s creatures, including the sparrows, they are precious in God’s eyes and will not be abandoned. On the contrary, even the hairs on their heads are numbered by God. Trust in God is the appropriate response to suffering endured for the sake of God’s empire as opposed to the empire of Rome. Trust in God does not take away the pain. As we move into this most extraordinary of Ordinary Times, we join with asylum seekers, refugees, the unemployed and the underemployed, with African American communities and especially, in this context, with the First Peoples of this country, for the justice that is their right. They are precious in God’s eyes. They are precious in our eyes and must not be abandoned “*

### Evangelizio:

Sr Veronica’s reflection is informed by her ability to centre the gospel words in the world today where suffering is apparent for many groups. It falls to a Christian people to embrace those who suffer and attempt to ease their burden while relying on the ultimate mercy of God with faith and trust. Benedictine Oblates have made sacred promises to serve God and humanity in whatever opportunity presents and by being aware of suffering, and holding those who suffer close, we can slowly and steadily live these gospel values, as spoken by Jesus to his disciples.