

Lectio Divina for the 17th Sunday Year A

The readings are:

1 Kings 3:5 and 7-12

Romans 8:28-30

Matthew 13:44-52

Lectio: Read the First Reading from 1 Kings, chapter 3, verse 5, and verses 7-12.

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 moving within as you read. This is the true “oratio” (prayer) of *Lectio Divina*.

Meditatio: Some informed background so we can honour the text in its original meaning.

It is both an historical text – (Solomon is the next king after his father David), and a teaching on prayer. The “dream” is a means of divine communication, both in the Old and New Testaments. Joseph had a dream. An angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, ‘Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit’. In Bauer’s Encyclopedia of Biblical Theology, there is a long explanation of the way dreams were widespread throughout the ancient world. This universal belief in dreams made it possible for God to use the dream as a medium of revelation. (Volume 1, 215). You may also want to read a cultic dream (Gen 28:11ff); a political dream (Judges 7:13ff); purely personal dreams: (Gen 40:8ff and Job 33:15). These texts are noted by Bauer.

With this background, read the text again, take it on board, slow down, and take a long time to ponder on it. Build into each day some quiet time. Be still before the Lord. After pondering over many hours or longer, you will want to make your response.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 118

The response is: LORD, I LOVE YOUR COMMANDS.

These words, as a response, bring the focus back onto Solomon’s prayer for wisdom. Psalm 118 is the longest psalm in the Psalter. In the Monastic Office, it is prayed every day at Terce, the third hour of daylight. Each block begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

Lectio: Read the Second text from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans, Ch. 8, verses 28-30.

Meditatio: Summing up Fitzmyer’s commentary, there are two clear teachings. The reference to God cooperating “in all things” with those who love him, is seen as the realization of God’s plan of salvation. Vs. 29: According to the divine plan of salvation, the Christian is to reproduce in himself or herself an image of Christ by a progressive share in his risen life.

Vs. 30: God’s plan, involving call, election, predestination, justification, is aimed at the final destiny of glory for all who put faith in Christ Jesus. (NJBC 51:90).

PAUSE. Read the text again. Listen to the Holy Spirit playing on the fibres of your heart like a harpist, to bring forth the most authentic melody of your response...

The Gospel Verse is from Matthew 11:25

BLESSED ARE YOU FATHER, LORD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH;

YOU HAVE REVEALED TO LITTLE ONES THE MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM.

Lectio: Read the Gospel text from Matthew 13:44-52.

Pause and ponder.

Meditatio: Some background to the text so that we can better respond to it.

We are back with parables this Sunday: The parable of the treasure, the parable of the pearl, and the parable of the dragnet.

All these parables can be found only in Matthew. We could ask: Did Matthew have a love for the parables and the way they portrayed the Kingdom of God?

Was he an eager disciple, hungry for God?

Whatever the answers to these questions may be, the message is clear: to seize the kingdom of God is the chance of a lifetime. Half measures will not do. A comment on “old and new” – in Matthew,

understanding is a characteristic of the good disciple.

Verse 52 is described as "...a kind of parable that concludes the chapter of seven other parables. It is a parable about making parables, a metaparable that invites the reader/hearer to enter the parabolic process through creating new parables to add to the ones just given.

Stand back from this text. Later, read it again until something leaps out and then stay with that. Go to a quiet corner of your garden or a nature reserve, or your own home, or a church which is open for prayer. Hear the words: BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD. 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.

***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.**

*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.*

Acknowledging Sr Hildegard for this lectio.