***LECTIO DIVINA*: Holy Reading**

May 31st, 2015, is the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity. Known as "Trinity Sunday" this day was originally kept only as the Octave Day of Pentecost. It was not until the Middle Ages that this Sunday was widely observed as a separate feast in honour of the Holy Trinity. The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church notes**:** **"**Its observance, introduced to mark the conclusion of the liturgical commemorations of the life of Christ and the descent of the Holy Spirit by a celebration embracing God in all three Persons, was universally enjoined by Pope John XXII in 1334."

The readings for Trinity Sunday are:
Deuteronomy 4:32-34 and 39-40.
Romans 8:14-17.
Matthew 28:16-20.

For those who pray the Liturgy of the Hours, the Psalter takes Week 1.

Before beginning *Lectio Divina*, let us look at the week ahead in Liturgy, the Australian Church, and the Social Justice Calendar.

In the Liturgy:

June 1: St. Justin Martyr (Memorial)

June 3: St Charles Lwanga & Companions. (Memorial)

June 5: St. Boniface (Memorial)

The Social Justice Calendar:

May 31: World No Tobacco Day.

June 1: World Communications Day. Theme: "Communication at the service of an authentic culture of encounter."

June 3: 1886 – Catholic and Anglican Martyrs of Uganda.

Also on this day in 1992, the High Court of Australia handed down the decision in the Mabo Case.

June 4: International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Agression.

June 4: 1989 – Tiananmen Square Massacre

June 5: World Environment Day.

In the Australian Church:

May 31: Diocese of Broken Bay celebrates its Patronal Feast – Mary, Star of the Sea.

June 3: Diocese of Maitland/Newcastle remembers the death of Bishop Leo Clarke in 2006.

***Lectio*: Read the first reading from the Book of Deuteronomy, chapter 4:32-34 and 39-40. Read it aloud. 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.** This beautiful text has a history – the Israelites have travelled the spiritual journey of recognition and conviction: there is only one God, the true God who has journeyed with them and been there for them throughout their history. Because of this, the people are exhorted by Moses to keep the laws of God and the commadments of God, as they are given to them by Moses, so that they will prosper and live long in the land the Lord their God gives them. The longer unit spans chapter 4, verses 32-40, and it is good to read it through as a single unit. The Jerome Biblical Commentary sums it up as "the unique vocation of Israel and one of the rhetorical high points" of the Book of Deuteronomy.

The author compares the unique vocation of Israel with the uniqueness of the Lord.

After much pondering, take time to respond to the text. You may want to ponder for a day or more, as you work, walk, garden…sit and watch the ocean, the lake, the river, the mountains. Just take time. I share my response to this reading in *Evangelizatio* No. 1.

The responsorial Psalm: The response is: HAPPY THE PEOPLE THE LORD HAS CHOSEN TO BE HIS OWN.

This is a direct response to the theme of the first reading, the unique vocation of Israel. Psalm 32, in its original context is a joyful song to the Creator, and a National Hymn of thanksgiving for the way God has journeyed with the people of Israel through their history.

Pray with the Psalm throughout the week, marking the words, phrases or lines which speak to you and call forth prayer from your heart.

***Lectio*:** Read the Second Mass Reading: Romans 8:14-17.

***Meditatio*:** This text is part of a longer unit, spanning verses 14-30. It is the Holy Spirit who animates and activates the Christian and makes one a Child of God. Not only that, but we are joint-heirs of the Father's "estate" so to speak by reason of our relationship with Christ. We too, one day, will share in the glory which Christ now has with His Father. (cf. New Jerome Biblical Commentary, 51:84 & 85 for a fuller commentary. However, beware of becoming too analytical and moving away from prayer). The bottom line is: We are one with the Father, children of God whom Christ has reconciled to God, and brought to life (animated and activated) by the power of the Holy Spirit. We couldn't ask for anything more. May we remain focussed on this truth and live in hope. With this background, read the text again, and then ponder as you work or take time for leisure. I share my response in *Evangelizatio* 2

The Gospel Verse is adapted from Apocalypse 1:8. GLORY TO THE FATHER, THE SON, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT: TO GOD WHO IS, WHO WAS, AND WHO IS TO COME. (May we make this a daily prayer troughout the coming week).

***Lectio*:** Now read the Gospel text from Matthew 28:16-20.

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

The Glenstal Bible Missal has a beautiful summary of this Gospel text. I quote: "The Father summons all the nations, the Son gathers them together, the Spirit is given to them in baptism: the Church continues to be born of the Trinity." This text is also described as "the great commission" and is paralleled by Mark 16:14-18, Luke 24:36-49, John 20:19-23 and Acts 1:9-11. "The great missionary commission…contains a general command to go forth and make disciples and it is a universal call which applies to all peoples including their cultures…" (cf. NJBC 42:168).

Make your response in the days ahead. I share mine in Evangelizatio No. 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 everday life.

1. I am responding to this text as though it is being spoken to me personally. And the central focus for me is is the "voice of the living God speaking from the fire". Like the people of Israel, I too hear the Word of God speaking from the "fire" – the fire of the Gospel. The Word of God is for me a consuming fire for God is a consuming fire. I have always, as long as I can remember, allowed the fire of God's Word to burn in my heart and to change my life. I pray for the grace to go on living this way. And I note in the Social Justice Calendar for June 3rd, that the Catholic and Anglican Martyrs of Uganda, surrendered their lives for their faith, because of the fire that burned in their hearts way back in 1886. The young Chinese Students were slain in Tiananmen Square in 1989 on June 4th, for a different "fire", but nevertheless, a "fire" that burned in their hearts. People all over the world give their lives for "causes". And these "causes" begin with a "fire" that burns in one's heart.
2. I am responding to the words, "sharing His sufferings so as to share His glory." This I must not forget. I

share in the sufferings of Christ, and I will share in the glory of Christ. Sr. Joan Chittister, in her Book "Our Holy Yearnings", quotes Ralph Waldo Emerson as saying, "When it is dark enough, you can see the stars." I believe this is like sharing in the sufferings of Christ in order to share in Christ's glory. Sr. Joan also says herself that "…it is only the darkness that propels us toward new light." That doesn't make the darkness any easier to bear. And that is when we need our friends and support groups. And these friends and support groups are gifts from God. God is there for us.

3. As an Australian, I give thanks for all who have brought the Gospel of Jesus to our land and our culture, and pray that I will go on doing this in my life, so that the footprint I leave behind will be the footprint of Divine Love. Thank you Lord for your words, "Know that I am with you always."

LECTIO DIVINA IS PRAYER WITH THE SACRED SCRIPTURES. WE READ, WE SEEK TO UNDERSTAND WITH THE HELP OF A COMMENTARY, WE PONDER, WE TAKE TIME FOR STILLNESS. And we

RESPOND…IT IS A WAY OI F LIFE, NOT A METHOD OF PRAYER. TAKE THE MOTHER OF GOD AS YOUR MODEL.