***LECTIO DIVINA* (Holy Reading)**
PRAYING WITH THE SACRED SCRIPTURES
Sunday 17 January 2016
2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year C
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:
January 21: St. Agnes (Memorial)

In the Australian Church:
There are no anniversaries this week.

The Social Justice Calendar:
There are no events to record this week.

LET US NOW MOVE INTO PRAYER WITH THE SACRED TEXTS

The readings are:
Isaiah 62:1-5
1 Corinthians 12:4-11
John 2:1-11

Lectio: **Read the first reading from the Prophet Isaiah, chapter 62, verses 1-5.** Read slowly and prayerfully, really listening to the text as you read aloud. This is about my on-going conversion.

***Meditatio*: Understanding the text so that we can immerse ourselves in it and make our response to it.**
Carroll Stuhlmueller, C.P., in his commentary on Second and Third Isaiah, has the following insight on this short text (from Third Isaiah): "God breaks the silence of many years in this song of 'splendid impatience'. Zion's vindication breaks forth with the suddenness of the desert dawn. (60:1).
The names like "Forsaken" and "My Delight in her" are known in Israelite history. (cf. 1 Kings 22:42, and 2 Kings 21:1).
"Espoused" as a name for Israel means that Hosea 2:18 is forgotten and the association with fertility cults is no problem. The theme of the Lord as spouse is not just repeated (cf. Isaiah 49:14 and 50:1), but adulterous Israel is restored to that joyful, innocent age of long ago when she was the virgin spouse of God." (cf. the New Jerome Biblical Commentary for this background – 21:61).

Take time to ponder on this text in the days ahead as you go about your work, rest, recreation. Allow the Holy Spirit to work on the fibres of your heart, and bring forth the melody of your response to this text. I share mine in *Evangelizatio* 1.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 95
The response is: PROCLAIM HIS MARVELLOUS DEEDS TO ALL THE NATIONS.

Psalm 95:1-3 and 7-10 is given to us for prayer. It is a Psalm about the universal reign of the true God. It is a simple Psalm of praise for God's Presence in all creation.

Pray with the Psalm throughout the week and stay with the lines that call you forth to respond.

Lectio: **Read the second text from the first Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians, chapter 12, verses 4-11.**

Meditatio: **Some background to the text so that we understand it better and can then make our response.**
The theme of the text is obvious on a first reading. It is about the gifts of the Spirit and begins with chapter 12, verse 1. It seems that a question has been raised by the Corinthian Church and Paul is answering that question with this text.
Verses 4-7: since all the gifts have a common origin they should serve a common purpose.
Verses 8-10: The list of gifts is not exhaustive. (cf. 1 Cor. 12:27-30, Romans 12:6-8 and Ephesians 4:11).
Verse 11: Since the Spirit gives each gift and operates each gift, no one should be puffed up with pride.
(For this brief background, I have summarized the notes in the NJBC, 49:59).

Read the text again and allow the Holy Spirit to work on your heart. What words, what phrases, what sentences are to change your life? I share my response in *Evangelizatio* 2.

The Gospel Verse is adapted from 2 Thessalonians 2:14.
GOD HAS CALLED US WITH THE GOSPEL, TO SHARE IN THE GLORY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Lectio: **Read the Gospel text from John 2:1-11.**
Read it slowly and reflectively and maybe a second time. Try to read aloud rather than with the mind. Listen to the text as you read.

Meditatio: **What is it about?**
The whole text spans verses 1-12. It is the first of the miracles in this Gospel and is referred to as one of the "signs" of Jesus and is made into the occasion for a revelation of Jesus' glory that leads his disciples to believe in him. (vs. 11).
The symbols of water and wine go deep.
Water: the symbol of Jewish purification rituals.
Wine: the wine of the New Covenant and the wine of the Messianic wedding feast. (cf. Is. 54:48, and Is. 62:4-5.
Abundant wine is frequently a sign of restoration (cf. Amos 9:13 and Hosea 2:24, and Joel 4:18).
John's special word "hour" is mentioned in verse 4.
Overall the miracle is described as a beginning.
John 4:54, the healing of the Official's son, is the second sign worked by Jesus. (cf. NJBC 61:40).

Read the Gospel text a number of times during the week. Sit with the text for many "quiet" times. Listen to the Holy Spirit playing like a harpist on the fibres of your heart to bring forth the melody of your response. I share my response in *Evangelizatio* 3

***EVANGELIZATIO: My lived response to the* texts with which the Church gives me each Sunday for my formation as a Christian. St. James says "Be doers of the Word." And the Book of Deuteronomy tells us that the Word of God is in our hands to do it.**

1. While most of us associate adultery with betrayal of a marriage, I believe there are many ways of living in adultery and thus profaning our relationship with God. One betrayal familiar to all of us is replacing God with the god of consumerism, of greed, of power. Sr. Joan Chitister, in her Commentary on the Rule of St. Benedict, shares the following wisdom: "Dependence on God may be what is lacking in a society where consumerism and accumulation have become the root diseases of a world in which everything is not enough and nothing satisfies." Each of us has to discern whether consumerism and accumulation have taken the place of God in our lives. Or, whether other false gods have taken the place of the one true God.

2. My response is to the way the seed of the Word of God is planted in our hearts, where it takes root and brings forth plants which have been watered and fertilized by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit works within each of us to produce the fruits, or gifts. The list, as we have seen in the commentary is not exhaustive. One of us may have the gift of "awareness", aware when another person is sad and in need of comfort, aware that someone is ill and needs help with shopping or housekeeping. Another person has a gift for creating beauty – making a garden, refurbishing a room or a patio and bringing joy to others. Another has a gift for saying the "healing word" or simply giving a healing hug or handshake. Sometimes this is the greatest miracle! Every time the Word of God takes root in my heart, it grows and produces its fruits/gifts.

3. My response is to the words of the Mother of Jesus: "Do whatever he tells you." Mary was the one who had been formed in the Word of God all her life, and had said her "yes" to God. Jean Laplace, S.J. says it so beautifully: "She heard Simeon speak of the sword of sorrow. Ten years later she hears Jesus' reference to the Father's business or the house of his Father – words she does not understand at that moment. Instead of forgetting, or hardening herself against them, she allows them to rest in her soul. Later at Cana she hears "the hour" mentioned and still later during the public life they tell her of the allusion to those who do the will of the Father, who are mother, brother and sisters to Jesus. Little by little, like the seed of the parable falling into good soil, these words bud forth in her heart. At the foot of the cross they bear fruit. Mary understands the mystery being accomplished…the sword that pierces her heart is that of God's word which cuts to the quick, gives light and strength to overcome."

("Prayer According to the Scriptures" by Jean Laplace, S.J. Translated by Mary Louise Powell, r.c. – Religious of the Cenacle, 200 Lake Street, Brighton, Massachusetts 02135).

4.

Lectio Divina is about reading the Sacred Scriptures
and
reflecting on them from an informed background.
It is allowing the Holy Spirit
to play on the fibres of my heart like a harpist,
and bring forth the beauty of my response.
In responding to the text,
my life is changed more and more into Christ.