***LECTIO DIVINA* (Holy Reading)**
PRAYING WITH THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.
Sunday, June 28th 2015
13th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B.
For those who pray the Liturgy of the Hours, the Psalter takes Week One.

Before we pray, let us look to the week ahead:

In the Liturgy:
June 29: Sts. Peter and Paul (Solemnity)
July 3**:** St. Thomas (Feast)

In the Australian Church:
June 29: Bathurst – Anniversary of the Dedication of the Cathedral – 1985
July 3: Wilcannia-Forbes – Episcopal Ordination of Bishop Columba Macbeth-Green – 2014.

In the Social Justice Calendar:
June 30: On this day in 1945, Unemployment Benefits were introduced in Australia.
July 1: 2012 – Commencement of Fair Work Amendment (TCF Industry) Act 2011, ensuring fair pay and conditions for outworkers in the garment industry.

LET US NOW MOVE INTO PRAYER WITH THE SACRED TEXTS
WHICH THE CHURCH GIVES US
FOR THE 13TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR B

Readings:
Wisdom 1:13-15, 2:23-24
2 Corinthians 8:7, 9, 13-15
Mark 5:21-43

***Lectio*:**
Read the first text from the Book of Wisdom.
Be aware of the way you handle your bible. Take it up reverently and read the sacred text with deep reverence. This text is given to all of us on this particular Sunday in the Church's Liturgical Year, for our formation as Christians.

Meditatio:
Some background on the text, so that we can understand it more profoundly, and make our response to it:
This powerful reading is best understood in the light of the Easter events of the New Testament, which restore humanity to receive the freely granted gift of eternal life with God.

Since the Wisdom Literature seeks to understand life and death and related issues, it is important to note here that "the author is not speaking of physical death but of spiritual death, the eternal separation from God. The author seems to be indifferent to the fate of the body." (cf. NJBC 33:11). The physical world around us does not have the capacity to cause spiritual death.

Hades is, in Biblical understanding, the abode of the dead. It has no power.
Virtue (or a just life) is undying. God gifts the just with a freely granted divine gift of unending life with God.
Wisdom never says that we are immortal but that we by nature, receive immortality as a divine gift (cf. NJBC 33:11). This theology is advanced for its time.

The book was written in Greek, and the purpose of the author was to strengthen the faith of his fellow Jews in Alexandria. The Jewish community was open to all kinds of contemporary influences which could undermine faith – conquests in science, a variety of religious and philosophical systems, cosmopolitan and individualistic mentalities, to name just a few. (NJBC 33:5). With this background in mind, read the text again. Ponder for a while. Maybe a day or more! Then make your response. (I share my response in Evangelizatio 1).

Lectio:
The Responsorial Psalm
The response: I will praise you Lord, for you have rescued me.
Psalm 29 is a Psalm of thanksgiving for recovering from sickness. As a response to the First Reading, I see it as a prayer of thanksgiving for recovery from the sickness caused to one's spirit by the influence of secular values. Pray with the Psalm throughout the week and note the words, phrases or lines which speak to your heart.

Lectio:
Read the second text from the Second Letter to the Corinthians 8:7,9,13-15.

Meditatio:
This text is difficult – made more so by the few commentaries into which I have delved. So, to simplify it: The Corinthians are reminded that they have the most of spiritual gifts. In the light of this, Paul places expectations on them – "we expect you to put the best into this work of mercy too." The work of mercy is to help the Jerusalem Church. One day they themselves may be in need of help. They are asked to share their surplus wealth, however little it may be. They are not being asked to strip themselves of the necessities of life at the expense of their own families. (cf. NJBC 50:35).

Stand back from the reading and go about your work for a while. Maybe a day or two. Be alert to the grace of God. Listen to the Holy Spirit playing on the fibres of your heart like a harpist on the strings of the harp. The Holy Spirit will bring forth the most beautiful response to this reading. You will be surprised by the Spirit. (I share my response in *Evangelizatio* 2).

***Lectio*:**
The Gospel Verse is taken from 2 Timothy 1:10
"Our Saviour Jesus Christ has done away with death and brought us life through the Gospel." (This takes us back to the first reading from Wisdom and into the Gospel which follows).

***Lectio*:**
Read the Gospel text from Mark 5:21-43.
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. Stand back from it and ponder.

***Meditatio*:**

Some background to help us understand the text and respond to it:

This beautiful text presents Jesus as healer of the sick and the one who raises us to new life:

The daughter of Jairus – 12 years old.

The woman with the hemorrhage, an outcast because she was deemed unclean – touching the hem of Christ's garment because she couldn't show her face.

The ending is a profound insight into the humanity of Jesus. He understood that the little girl would be hungry, just as children are always hungry when they wake up.

These are two Gospel "gems".

Spend quality time with them throughout the week.

Read the Gospel text again slowly. Stand back from the text and the commentary and go about your work quietly ruminating. (I share my response in Evangelizatio 3).

EVANGELIZATIO:

My lived response to the texts with which the Church exhorts me to pray. 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. I don't have to ponder long to respond to this text and note the things that try to draw me away from union with God in Jesus: the world of advertising with its clever twists and turns and technological tricks to convince me of the things I need in order to be satisfied in life; the tragic emphasis on physical looks and the worship of the body which is flaunted on television and social media. It is hard for all of us to stay grounded. *Lectio Divina* is the way I stay grounded. I too, need the reassurance given by the author of the Book of Wisdom. A friend shared with me that her three girls are now growing up. When they were little, she and her husband only permitted them to watch ABC Television in the afternoons or the daytime. As they began to grow and to progress through school, they were introduced to commercial television, and all of a sudden, under the influence of advertising, they would come to Mum or Dad with requests for things they needed: a new pillow to help them sleep better, a new mattress, new shoes, new clothes, just because some company was having a sale – most of all a new computer! So, it has been a battle for these parents, and I would guess for millions of parents who can't stop children being exposed to television advertising or the advertising over the internet.
2. My response is to ponder on the many ways we give and to share my belief that the giving of "self" in service of others is just as important as the giving of money to "causes" for the poor. Back in May, we witnessed the amazing dedication of those who volunteer at the Ronald MacDonald House in Westmead. We also witnessed the giving of donations when Channel 7 had the telethon to raise money for this most worthy cause. We also saw (in April and into May) those who pushed wheelchairs in the Anzac Day Parade, and for the Parade to remember the end of World War II in Europe. And what of those who went to Nepal after the two earthquakes – people from so many countries flown in to help in any way that was needed? But on a day to day level, the smaller picture is more relevant for most of us – the wearing of a pink ribbon on Breast Cancer Awareness Day, the visiting of the elderly and the sick, and helping the neighbour next door. May we be alert to all the ways in which we can give….just to be there when someone needs us…

3. My response is to the words of Jairus: "My little daughter is desperately sick. Do come and lay your hands on her to make her better and save her life." Is this not the cry of men and women in refugee camps, war zones and countries ravaged by natural disasters, those who cradle their sick and starving children and weep into their little bodies? Gabriela Mistral says, "Many things we need can wait. The child cannot. Now is the time the child's bones are being formed, the child's blood is being made, the child's mind is being developed. To the child we cannot say 'tomorrow'. The child's name is 'today'." *Lord Jesus, millions of children today are desperately sick, as they languish in Refugee camps and in countries ravaged by war and natural disasters. Lay your hands on them and save their lives. Comfort their parents who agonize over the plight of their little ones, as they watch them starving to death, or dying of illnesses related to malnourishment. Lord have mercy on them.*

Lectio Divina is about reading the Sacred Scriptures.
Reflecting on the Sacred Scriptures 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.
Lectio Divina is a way of life not a method of prayer.