

LECTIO DIVINA (Holy Reading)
PRAYING WITH THE SACRED SCRIPTURES
Sunday 9 June 2024
10th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B.
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:

- 11: St. Barnabas. Memorial
- 13: St. Anthony of Padua (Memorial)

In the Australian and New Zealand Catholic Church:

- 14: Toowoomba - Episcopal ordination of the Most Rev. Kenneth Howell, 2017.
- 15: Perth - Episcopal ordination of the Most Rev. Timothy Costelloe SBD, 2007.

Social Justice Calendar:

- 10: The Myall Creek Massacre (1838)
- 11: 1975 – Enactment of the Racial Discrimination Act.
- 12: World Day Against Child Labour.

LET US NOW MOVE INTO PRAYER WITH THE SACRED TEXTS

The readings are:

- Gen. 3:9-15.
- 2 Cor. 4:13-5:1.
- Mark 3: 20-35

Lectio: Read the First Text from the Book of Genesis Chapter 3, verses 9-15.

Meditatio: A little background to the text so that we understand it and make a response.

This reading presents two aspects of the life of human beings: blame and nakedness.

1. Blame: it was the woman's fault. It was the serpent's fault. Someone to sue and someone to blame, as Richard Rohr would say. But as Fr. John Powell would say: the day we stop blaming, is the day we grow up and move forward.
2. Nakedness: Some of us are badly damaged – life has been unkind to us. We have been made to feel worthless too many times. We hide and curl up inside. All of us are or feel vulnerable at times in our lives.

Read the text again and maybe a third time. Read it slowly, marking some of the words, phrases, sentences which may cause you to stop and recognize that the Holy Spirit is calling you to a word, a phrase, a sentence, or to the whole text. Ponder for a while. Maybe a day or more! Make your response. I share my response in *Evangelizatio* 1.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 129

The response is : WITH THE LORD THERE IS MERCY AND FULLNESS OF REDEMPTION.

Psalm 129 is a psalm of repentance and trust. Waiting for the dawn of Israel's great deliverance. The psalmist, aware of people's faithlessness, is equally sure of God's answer to repentance (cf. Nehemiah 1:7-9) Grail Psalter, 1973.

Lectio: Read the second text from the Second Letter to the Corinthians 4:13-5:1.

Meditatio: Brief explanation of the text, so that we can understand it and respond.

The message: Life is transformed, "for we know that when the tent that we live in on earth is folded up, there is a house built by God for us, an everlasting home in the heavens." Visible things last only for a time. Invisible things are eternal.

In this text, what phrases, what sentences, what words are to change your life? I share my response in *Evangelizatio 2*.

The Gospel Verse is from John 12:31b-32

THE PRINCE OF THIS WORLD WILL NOW BE CAST OUT,
AND WHEN I AM LIFTED UP FROM THE EARTH
I WILL DRAW ALL TO MYSELF, SAYS THE LORD.

Lectio: Read the Gospel from Mark 3:20-35

Meditatio: Brief commentary on the text, so that we can understand it and respond.

The Commentary this week is from an unknown Greek Author of the Fifth Century.

"The signs of the Lord's resurrection are obvious: deception has ceased, envy has been banished, strife is despised. Peace is held in honour, and war has been done away with. No longer do we bewail the Adam who was fashioned first; instead we glorify the second Adam. No longer do we reproach Eve for transgressing God's command: instead we bless Mary for being the Mother of God. No longer do we avert our eyes from the wood of the tree: instead we carry the Lord's cross. We no longer fear the serpent: instead we revere the Holy Spirit...the sun is no longer darkened. Instead everything is bathed in light."

Read the Gospel again. Take quiet time and allow the Word to sink deep within until you come to your response. I share mine 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. One of my sisters could never read publicly in church, for the simple reason that she had no confidence. Why? Because she had been made to stand on the platform before the whole class so that they could see her as a failure. Not once, but over and over. If children are exposed for failing or misbehaving too many times, they will be naked, and will seek hidden places. They will not put themselves in the limelight – exposure is very painful for such a person. Is this a description of the pain any of us may have suffered way back when we were children or even as adults? Are we still blaming others for how we are?
2. My response is to the "tent" and the meaning behind it. A tent was a dwelling. The feast of Tents (tabernacles, booths) was celebrated from 15-22 October to remind people that their fathers dwelt in these tents during the wilderness journeys. The other more important use of the word applies to the ability to fold up the tent and move on quickly. A tent was not a permanent fixture, hence the freedom to keep moving. I hear it as a message for me when I

cling to possessions too much. I hate to think how much it would cost to downsize my collections and find someone to take them from me. When I look at the news, I see a man driving a cart in Gaza. His wife and children are in the back with their possessions. They had to pack in a hurry to avoid the violence that is targeting them. A few possessions, sad faces, fatigue. These are the poverty-stricken people of our world: Gaza, Palestine, Ukraine, Haiti, Russia, (the citizens who don't want war and are being persecuted for it). Israel (the people who don't want war and are being persecuted for it.)

3. I have trouble with part of the commentary: "War has been done away with". The reality is so different. War is all around us – almost every country is caught up in war, or the consequences of war. The world humanitarian crisis only gets worse. "All they that take up the sword shall perish with the sword." (Matthew 26:52). Perhaps one of the most tragic wars of history was the Crimean War, where Florence Nightingale served as a nurse and had to also minister as a doctor. In this war I am selecting out "the charge of the Light Brigade". Because we live in the age of nuclear weaponry, we should not forget the brutality of war in the 19th century or before that time. The charge of the Light Brigade was a disastrous British Cavalry charge against heavily defended Russian troops at the Battle of Balaklava – 25 October 1854. The incompetence of James Brudenell in sending his men into the Russian weaponry resulted in 40% percent of his men losing their lives or being critically injured. Florence Nightingale said that the most bitter thing was listening to the horses dying. She and her helpers rescued the injured soldiers and worked like doctors to save their lives. They severed limbs where it was needed and dealt with rats running up and down inside the tents where the wounded lay. When these nurses came back from war and wanted to work in the hospitals, they were made to empty the slops. So, war has not been done away with – by no means. Let us continue to pray for peace.

An ironic parody of the Greek epitaph commemorating the Spartans who died at Thermopylae in 480BC "Go tell those old men, safe in bed, we took their orders and are dead." INSCRIPTION FOR ANY WAR.

*Lectio Divina is Holy Reading.
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.*

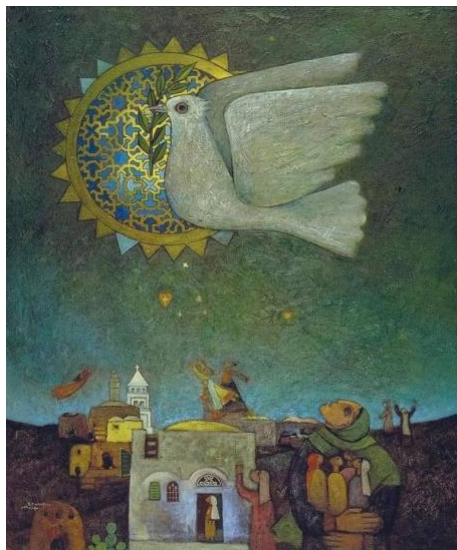


Image: "Hope" by Palestinian artist, Sliman Mansour