



Preparing for the Mass of Sunday 17th July 2019 - The Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 Relax & Remember

Set aside 10 -15 minutes and create a suitable environment by removing any distractions. Make sure that you are comfortable. Perhaps light a candle. Make the sign of the cross † and remain still for a minute of settling silence. **Call to mind the love that God has for you. Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present.** Then read the Gospel, preferably aloud and slowly, and pay attention to any words that stand out. If any do, meditate on them for a few minutes and be invited into a dialogue with God.



2 Read

Taken from the Gospel for 17th July 2019 (Luke 10:25-37): The Good Samaritan

There was a lawyer who, to disconcert Jesus, stood up and said to him, "Master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" He replied, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself." "You have answered right," said Jesus. "Do this and life is yours." But the man was anxious to justify himself and said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbour?" Jesus replied, "A man was once on his way down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of brigands; they took all he had, beat him and then made off, leaving him half dead. Now a priest happened to be travelling down the same road, but when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. In the same way a Levite who came to the place saw him, and passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan traveller who came upon him was moved with compassion when he saw him. He went up and bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them. He then lifted him on to his mount, carried him to the inn and looked after him. Next day, he took out two denarii and handed them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and on my way back I will make good any extra expense you have.' Which of these three, do you think, proved himself a neighbour to the man who fell into the brigands' hands?" "The one, who took pity on him," he replied. Jesus said to him, "Go, and do the same yourself."



3 Reflect

After spending a few minutes considering this Gospel, continue by reading Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflection.

To many a Jew at the time of Jesus the hatred of the Samaritans was such that a Good Samaritan was a contradiction in terms. It is striking that Luke changes the dialogue about the two commandments. In Mark's and Matthew's accounts Jesus answers the question about the commandments, while in Luke Jesus challenges the questioner, who then himself gives the right answer. It is also striking that, in his reply at the very end, the lawyer, despite Jesus' praise of him, cannot bring himself to pronounce the hated name, 'Samaritan', and says 'the one who...'. The conscientious dilemma of the priest and the Levite reveals a dry humour within this story: if the huddled traveller turns out to be dead, they will incur corpse-defilement and be unable to perform their sacred duties! This legal difficulty makes the Samaritan's attentive generosity all the more poignant, for a Samaritan is free of any such hang-ups. Love shown to the unfortunate and the down-trodden is a major theme in Luke's Gospel. But note also the Samaritan's careful administration of his funds: he gives not a blank cheque but two days' wages, which he will supplement on his return if necessary!

What is the main point of Jesus' story? Is it to be generous or not to be judgmental?

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

4 Respond & Request

Now slowly and prayerfully read the Gospel once again but this time in silence. Consider how this Gospel could apply to your life in general. Then thank God for any insight you may have received. Conclude by asking God to bless you with one of the following spiritual gifts to help you act on any resolution you have made: love, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, self control, patience, or joy. Please remember to pray for the Church and particularly our school families. **Then conclude by requesting the prayers of Our Lady & St Joseph.**



WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS †

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of Sunday 17th July 2019



First Reading: *Moses' Final Counsel*

Deuteronomy 30:10-14

Moses said to the people: "Obey the voice of the Lord your God, keeping those commandments and laws of his that are written in the Book of this Law, and you shall return to the Lord your God with all your heart and soul. For this Law that I enjoin on you today is not beyond your strength or beyond your reach. It is not in heaven, so that you need to wonder, 'Who will go up to heaven for us and bring it down to us, so that we may hear it and keep it?' Nor is it beyond the seas, so that you need to wonder, 'Who will cross the seas for us and bring it back to us, so that we may hear it and keep it?' No, the Word is very near to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart for your observance."

The Book of Deuteronomy consists of four great discourses on the Law. This lovely passage concludes the last discourse, after which the death of Moses is recounted. It encourages the people to observe the Law. The Law, it teaches, is not obscure, or difficult, or far away; the people do not need to travel far or search deeply. The author is saying that the Law is Israel's natural inheritance, and so it is natural for them to observe it; it is almost – as we would say – second nature. The Law was God's most precious gift to Israel, a revelation of the divine nature and the divine ways to the world, and so a source of light and life. It revealed how Israel had to behave in order to be God's faithful people. Therefore, observance of the Law was not to be thought of as a tiresome obligation but a response in love to this gift made in love. For Christians the Law is brought to perfection in the incarnate Word of God, who is the perfect revelation of the Father, and is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Israel saw the revelation of God's will, and so of his nature, in the Law; Christians similarly see the full revelation of the glory of God in Christ Jesus.

How can I come to know God's ways? Why not (as a starting point) read John's Gospel (where we discover Jesus as the Way, the Truth and the Life)?

Second Reading: *Christ the First-born*

Colossians 1:15-20

Christ Jesus is the image of the unseen God and the firstborn of all creation, for in him were created all things in heaven and on earth: everything visible and everything invisible, Thrones, Dominations, Sovereignities, Powers - all things were created through him and for him. Before anything was created, he existed, and he holds all things in unity. Now the Church is his body, he is its head. As he is the Beginning, he was first to be born from the dead, so that he should be first in every way; because God wanted all perfection to be found in him and all things to be reconciled through him and for him, everything in heaven and everything on earth, when he made peace by his death on the cross.

This is the first of the readings we will hear from Colossians over the coming week; it is a hymn to the pre-eminence of Christ. It falls into two stanzas: the first proclaims Christ's pre-eminence as firstborn in creation, the second his pre-eminence as first-born from the dead. As first-born in creation he is the image of the invisible God, in whom all is created, just as, in the Book of Wisdom, Wisdom is called the image of God, the reflection of the eternal light and the mirror of God's active power. In Wisdom, in Christ, God can be seen. In the second stanza, as first-born from the dead, Christ brings all things to perfection and completion. The hymn is a sort of parabola, starting with God in creation, descending to Christ as Lord of the Church, and returning with Christ to completion in God.

What does this passage teach us about Jesus Christ?

“Christ brings all things to perfection and completion.”

The Wednesday Word: *Connecting Home, School & Parish through the Word of God*

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