



Preparing for the Mass of Sunday 12th June 2016 - The Eleventh 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 12th June 2016 (Luke 7:36 - 8.3): The Woman who was a Sinner

One of the Pharisees invited Jesus to a meal. When he arrived at the Pharisee's house and took his place at table, a woman came in, who had a bad name in the town. She had heard he was dining with the Pharisee and had brought with her an alabaster jar of ointment. She waited behind him at his feet, weeping, and her tears fell on his feet, and she wiped them away with her hair; then she covered his feet with kisses and anointed them with the ointment. When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who this woman is that is touching him and what a bad name she has." Then Jesus took him up and said, "Simon, I have something to say to you." "Speak Master," was the reply. "There was once a creditor who had two men in his debt; one owed him five hundred denarii, the other fifty. They were unable to pay, so he pardoned them both. Which of them will love him more?" "The one who was pardoned more, I suppose," answered Simon. Jesus said, "You are right." Then he turned to the woman. "Simon," he said, "you see this woman? I came into your house, and you poured no water over my feet, but she has poured out her tears over my feet and wiped them away with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but she has been covering my feet with kisses ever since I came in. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. For this reason I tell you that her sins, her many sins, must have been forgiven her, or she would not have shown such great love. It is the man who is forgiven little who shows little love." Then he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." Those who were with him at table began to say to themselves, "Who is this man, that he even forgives sins?" But he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

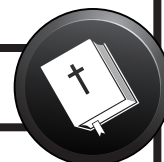
3 Reflect

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

This is a story of devotion and repentance, but a story also of the welcome of and hospitality given to Jesus. He does not rebuke the sinner or interrogate her. He sets no pre-conditions, demands no promise of improvement. The details of her sin are unimportant to him; the heartfelt repentance is all that matters. Of all the evangelists Luke especially stores up stories of the return of sinners: the Prodigal Son, the Pharisee and the Tax-Collector at Prayer, Zacchaeus, the Good Thief and the story of this woman too. To Matthew's story of Joy at the Man's Found Sheep Luke adds the story of Joy at the Woman's Found Coin (typically adding an example using a woman as well as a man). In contrast with Jesus and the woman stands the host at the dinner-party, Simon the Pharisee. Simon is not evil, but is a stickler for the observance of the Law, and is judgmental of others. However, Jesus is attentive to Simon as well: he gives him a question he can answer so that Jesus can affirm him; then Jesus points out Simon's shortcomings, then gently but firmly offering to Simon too the opportunity for repentance.

Who shows the most love in this story, and how? Do you, like Simon, find it too easy to judge others and hard to forgive?

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 12th June 2016



First Reading: *David's Repentance*

2 Samuel 12:7-10. 13

Nathan said to David, "The Lord the God of Israel says this, 'I anointed you king over Israel; I delivered you from the hands of Saul; I gave your master's house to you, his wives into your arms; I gave you the House of Israel and of Judah; and if this were not enough, I would add as much again for you. Why have you shown contempt for the Lord, doing what displeases him? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, taken his wife for your own, and killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. So now the sword will never be far from your House, since you have shown contempt for me and taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.'" David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." Then Nathan said to David, "The Lord, for his part, forgives your sin; you are not to die."

The account of David's adultery with Bathsheba is a great story. When Bathsheba tells him she is pregnant, he tries to disguise his crime by persuading Uriah, her husband, to sleep with her. When Uriah refuses, David arranges to have him killed in battle, in the hope of escaping the charge of adultery. This is where our reading begins, as David's own prophet, Nathan, tells David the score. David's is a story of rags-to-riches, shepherd boy to king, outwitting King Saul at every step, winning his way into the counsels of the Philistines, gradually building up his powerbase. For all his charismatic leadership, courage, ability to charm both men and women, skilled (and often crooked) diplomacy, David's true greatness lies in his repentance which we witness in this scene. In the Bible he is the model of the great sinner and the great repentant – indeed of the great public penitent, for he repents humbly and unremittently. Amid all his faults, David's warm and open relationship to the LORD is his salvation. It is glimpsed often in his story, and, though it does not save him from his great fall over Bathsheba, yet it brings him back to the LORD in heartfelt penitence. The story is, of course, chosen by the Church to pair with today's gospel reading about repentance.

Do you find it harder to forgive or to ask for forgiveness?

Second Reading: *Crucified with Christ*

Galatians 2:16. 19-21

We acknowledge that what makes a man righteous is not obedience to the Law, but faith in Jesus Christ. We had to become believers in Christ Jesus no less than you had, and now we hold that faith in Christ rather than fidelity to the Law is what justifies us, and that no one can be justified by keeping the Law. In other words, through the Law I am dead to the Law, so that now I can live for God. I have been crucified with Christ, and I live now not with my own life but with the life of Christ who lives in me. The life I now live in this body I live in faith: faith in the Son of God who loved me and who sacrificed himself for my sake. I cannot bring myself to give up God's gift: if the Law can justify us, there is no point in the death of Christ.

After Eastertide and the celebration of the feasts of the Lord we return to our readings from Ordinary Time and find ourselves in the middle of St Paul's letter to the Galatians. Paul is addressing a group in the Roman province of Galatia (part of modern day Turkey), who were probably mostly Jewish; he has helped them to see that the promises to Abraham were fulfilled in Christ. Then some other Jewish Christians came down from Jerusalem and told these new Christians that they must still observe the Jewish Law. Paul was furious, calls them 'Fools!', and re-asserts his teaching that one must trust only in Christ and his resurrection. He asks them to tell him who is the source of the works of the Spirit, which were plain for all to see among them. Is it the Law or is it Christ (who now lives in them)? Half measures will not do, and Paul goes on to tell of the total commitment of his own life to Christ. Once a burning zealot, he is now dead to the Law and lives only with the life of the Spirit in Christ. We cannot win our own salvation; it is won for us by Christ's sacrifice on the Cross.

What does it mean to you to say, "I have been crucified with Christ"? What difference should it make to our lives?

“Salvation is won
for us by Christ.”

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

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