



Preparing for the Mass of Sunday 6th October 2019 - The Twenty Seventh 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 6th October 2019 (Luke 17:5-10): The Reward of Faith

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith." The Lord replied, "Were your faith the size of a mustard seed you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you. Which of you, with a servant ploughing or minding sheep, would say to him when he returned from the fields, 'Come and have your meal immediately?' Would he not be more likely to say, 'Get my supper laid; make yourself tidy and wait on me while I eat and drink. You can eat and drink yourself afterwards?' Must he be grateful to the servant for doing what he was told? So with you: when you have done all you have been told to do, say, 'We are merely servants: we have done no more than our duty.'"



3 Reflect

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

The two sections of this Gospel reading appear at first sight to be entirely separate, the first about faith, the second about the reward of service; but they do fit together. The faith required consists not in reciting a creed but in hanging on by one's finger-tips, through thick and thin, to God's power and will to save. In nothing else is there any hope, not in my own power or ability. That is why, in the second section, we have no right to expect any sort of reward as our due from God. The value of our work in itself is secondary to our admission of helplessness and our trust in God's to save us. However, not all parables should be taken as allegories. The severe master here is not necessarily God, any more than the master who in another parable praises his crooked steward. When we hear the unyielding command of the master to the slave to expect nothing and to set about serving at supper, we cannot forget that at the Last Supper it was Jesus who put on his apron and washed his disciples' feet. We may be unworthy slaves, but Our Lord's action at the Last Supper gives us confidence that our Master ministers to us.

How do I best serve God and others?

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 6th October 2019



First Reading: *Keep Going*

Habakkuk 1:2-3; 2:2-4

How long, Lord, am I to cry for help while you will not listen; to cry "Oppression!" in your ear and you will not save? Why do you set injustice before me, why do you look on where there is tyranny? Outrage and violence, this is all I see; all is contention, and discord flourishes. Then the Lord answered and said, "Write the vision down, inscribe it on tablets to be easily read, since this vision is for its own time only: eager for its own fulfilment, it does not deceive; if it comes slowly, wait, for come it will, without fail. See how he flags, he whose soul is not at rights, but the upright man will live by his faithfulness."

This fascinating passage has two very different meanings; the first is the meaning of the original Hebrew prophet, the second is as a reflection on the meaning of 'faith' as mentioned in the gospel passage with which the Church pairs this first reading. The drift of the passage in the Hebrew prophet Habakkuk is endurance. 'Make it plain on tablets, so that a runner may read it' the original Hebrew reads – that is, as you whisk past, running your Marathon, you see an encouraging placard in the crowd, 'Keep going!' So the message in the last line is that, however tough and unpromising the course, the righteous person should live by endurance, perseverance, fidelity. The message was originally intended to keep up the spirits of the Jews as the Babylonian armies approached: it will be tough, but stick it out, for the Lord will not desert you. However, the Apostle Paul is using the Greek translation of the Hebrew text – of course he is writing in Greek – which reads 'the righteous person lives by fidelity/faith'. Paul uses the text in Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11 to prove that justification is by faith. Luther adds a further complication by adding, 'alone': 'the righteous person lives by faith alone'. But for Paul, faith expresses itself in action.

How does Christian faith and hope make life different?

Second Reading: *Sound Teaching*

2 Timothy 1:6-8. 13-14

I am reminding you to fan into a flame the gift that God gave you when I laid my hands on you. God's gift was not a spirit of timidity, but the Spirit of power, and love, and self control. So you are never to be ashamed of witnessing to the Lord, or ashamed of me for being his prisoner; but with me, bear the hardships for the sake of the Good News, relying on the power of God. Keep as your pattern the sound teaching you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. You have been trusted to look after something precious; guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

Today we start with the first of four Sunday readings from Second Timothy. The letters addressed to Timothy and Titus, those two central members of Paul's staff, are generally considered not to have been written by Paul himself. However, they are all part of the inspired word of God, and a handful of reputable scholars considers that Second Timothy is indeed by Paul. In 1 Corinthians 16:10-11 the Corinthians are urged to treat Timothy gently, and in today's passage the author seems to be encouraging Timothy himself against timidity; perhaps he was a naturally hesitant person. One of the principal emphases of all three letters to Timothy and Titus is the adherence to 'sound teaching': they are encouraged to think and act within the tradition of the teaching which they have received and to uphold its fundamental vision. This is, of course, already implied by the laying on of Paul's hands, for a Jewish rabbi would learn much by heart, and at the end of his training was commissioned to carry on the tradition in the name of his own teacher. Such methods would have been important for the preservation of the teaching of Jesus during the Pauline period, before it came to be written down in the gospels.

What is the "sound teaching" to which Paul refers?

“Keep to the tradition already established.”

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