



Preparing for the Mass of Sunday 24th February 2019 - The 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

The Gospel for Sunday 24th February 2019 - Unlimited Love (Luke 6.27-38)

Jesus said to his disciples: 'I say this to you who are listening: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who treat you badly. To the man who slaps you on one cheek, present the other cheek too; to the man who takes your cloak from you, do not refuse your tunic. Give to everyone who asks you, and do not ask for your property back from the man who robs you. Treat others as you would like them to treat you. If you love those who love you, what thanks can you expect? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what thanks can you expect? For even sinners do that much. And if you lend to those whom you hope to receive, what thanks can you expect? Even sinners lend to sinners to get back the same amount. Instead, love your enemies and do good, and lend without any hope of return. You will have a great reward, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. 'Be compassionate as your Father is compassionate. Do not judge, and you will not be judged yourselves; grant pardon, and you will be pardoned. Give, and there will be gifts for you: a full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap; because the amount you measure out is the amount you will be given back.'

3 Reflect

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

Luke's version of the Beatitudes, which formed last Sunday's reading, puts the emphasis not on Christian attitudes, as Matthew's version does, but on the blessing on those in real, dire need. Now he continues this with out duty to respond to those in need, even if they are hostile, even if they hate us. There must be no calculation whether we will get back money or property lent, no limit to how much we lend or give. At first it seems as if Luke is concerned only with money, and indeed he is so concerned, for he is always warning of the danger of possessions and the need to use them for those who have none. Luke is proclaiming Christ's Good News to a more affluent society than do Mark and Matthew, and places all the more emphasis on the danger of wealth. But, after dealing with money, Luke goes on to other acts of generosity. We must not judge, but must forgive in order to obtain forgiveness. Most of all, we must be compassionate. Whereas Matthew ends his instructions here with a general, 'Be perfect just as your heavenly Father is perfect', Luke focuses on compassion, 'Be compassionate just as your Father is compassionate.' It is an affair of the heart: we must be emotionally involved with those in need.

Which is more important, compassion or generosity?

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 24th February 2019



First Reading: *David spares Saul*

1 Samuel 26.2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23

Saul set off and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, accompanied by three thousand men chosen from Israel to search for David in the wilderness of Ziph. So in the dark David and Abishai made their way towards the force, where they found Saul asleep inside the camp, his spear stuck in the ground beside his head, with Abner and the troops lying round him. Then Abishai said to David, 'Today God has put your enemy in your power; so now let me pin him to the ground with his own spear. Just one stroke! I will not need to strike twice.' David answered Abishai, 'Do not kill him, for who can lift his hand against the Lord's anointed and be without guilt?' David took the spear and the pitcher of water from beside Saul's head, and they made off. No one saw, no one knew, no one woke up; they were all asleep, for a deep sleep from the Lord had fallen on them. David crossed to the other side and halted on the top of the mountain a long way off; there was a wide space between them, David then called out, 'Here is the king's spear. Let one of the soldiers come across and take it. The Lord repays everyone for his uprightness and loyalty. Today the Lord put you in my power, but I would not raise my hand against the Lord's anointed.'

This delightful story of David occurs when Saul is pursuing the young David in the wilderness of Judah, above the dead sea. The successful young warrior was getting too ambitious for the liking of King Saul, who, in a bad mood, tried to pin him to the wall with a spear, and then threw him out of court. David then gathered a band of outlaws, and Saul attempted to hunt him down. The result was this story. Was David Magnanimous, or was he already thinking that one day he, in his turn, would be the Lord's anointed? The assassination of the king would be a bad precedent! David was a fantastic leader, the sort of person whom anyone would follow anywhere. He was also a great sinner, committing adultery and murdering the cuckolded husband to make his own guilt seem less. But he was a great penitent too, a loveable and very human figure. Above all, he was the real founder of the Israelite monarchy and of the 'line of David' from which Jesus would come. To him were the promises made that God would be a father to the Son who would reign for ever on his throne.

Was David calculating or generous?

Second Reading: *Transformation in the Resurrection*

1 Corinthians 15.45-49

The first man, Adam, as scripture says, became a living soul; but the last Adam has become a life-giving spirit. That is, first the one with the soul, not the spirit, and after that, the one with the spirit. The first man being from the earth, is earthly by nature; the second man is from heaven. As this earthly man was, so are we on earth; and as the heavenly man is, so are we in heaven. And we, who have been modelled on the earthly man, will be modelled on the heavenly man.

This is the third of the four Sundays on which Paul is explaining the meaning of the Resurrection of Christians. The Resurrection of Christians follows the model of Jesus' own Resurrection. As the firstborn from the dead, Christ is the founder of the new humanity, just as Adam is the founder of the fallen humanity. 'Adam' means 'man', and the story of the fall in the Book of Genesis is not so much a story of an event long ago as the story of every human temptation and sin. However, the obedience of Christ, the Second Adam, undoes the disobedience of the First Adam. Just before this passage, Paul has explained that in the Resurrection we will all be changed, and transformed into the heavenly sphere, in the image of the Risen Christ. What was weak will be strong with the strength of God, what was contemptible will be glorious with the glory of God. He refuses to say what sort of bodies we will have, but he sums up the other changes by saying that whereas the life principle was the soul, in the Resurrection it will be the spirit of God.

What does the Resurrection of the body mean in the light of this teaching?

“ The Resurrection of Christians follows the model of Jesus' own Resurrection. ”

The Wednesday Word: *Connecting Home, School & Parish through the Word of God*
w: www.wednesdayword.org e: info@wednesdayword.org