



The Holy Scriptures
are our letters
from home

6th Sunday Ord. Time, Yr C

Lectio Divina

Lectio: Jesus had said to Simon: “*from now on it is men you will catch*” (cf last Sunday’s text, especially Lk 5:10b). Then Peter¹, James and John left everything and followed Jesus. However, these first disciples followed in trust; they probably didn’t know what Jesus meant by: ‘it is men you will catch’. While with Jesus, they saw him cure a leper. Jesus’ reputation was growing, Lk 5:12-16. They saw people were coming to Jesus to listen to him and to be healed by him. Often they would have seen Jesus get away for solitary prayer. Who is this Jesus? He prays a lot!

A crowd, including religious authorities from all over, were with Jesus in a house, he was healing the sick there. To get a paralyzed man to Jesus, some men lowered him through the roof. He forgave the man². So the authorities accused Jesus of blasphemy. But Jesus cures the man who walks away in front of them all, cf Lk 5:17-26. The new disciples would have wondered: ‘Who is this Jesus? He obviously is somehow connected with God!’ Leaving the house, Jesus sees Matthew the Tax Collector; he invites him to “follow me”. Matthew leaves everything and follows Jesus. Who is this Jesus? He seeks out the most detested, money grubbing, traitorous Roman collaborators! Matthew gave a great feast for Jesus, the religious authorities complained: Jesus is feasting with sinners! Jesus replies, ‘I have come to call sinners not the virtuous’ and ‘you don’t fast while the bridegroom is present’ and, the parable, ‘new wine, new skins’, cf Lk 5:27-39. Who is this Jesus? He doesn’t shun sinners!

Jesus goes on to challenge the authorities’ understanding of Sabbath rest. So, on a Sabbath day, Jesus cures a man with a withered hand in front of the authorities, Lk 6:1-11. Who is this Jesus? He is master of the Sabbath! This riled the authorities; they begin to find ways to get rid of Jesus.

Jesus then spends a whole night in prayer in the hills. He is readying himself for important choices and teachings he must soon make and announce. The next day, Jesus call his disciples to him and names his twelve apostles³, Lk 6:12-16. Who is this Jesus? He chooses such a motley crew!

► In our text, Jesus comes down the hill to a crowd from all over. He begins to tell of his new and counter-cultural understandings regarding the ways of love, its blessings and woes.

Read: Luke 6: 17,⁴ 20 – 26

Meditatio: Who is Jesus for me? Can I say that Jesus knows me by name⁵; am I special to him? Do I make time to listen to Jesus, in scriptural reflection, or meditation, or in heart-felt prayer? Do I turn to Jesus when I am ill? What would be my reaction if Jesus fixed his eyes on me? Do I have something to hide from Jesus or am I an ‘open book’ before him? With what is my life occupied, is it in helping God’s kingdom come? For what do I hunger? Am I satisfied with my life? What causes me to weep; am I concerned for the poor, the oppressed, innocent victims, degradation of the environment, etc.? Do I laugh at things I should take seriously? Have I been ‘put down’? Has my faith in Jesus caused me to be misrepresented and/or mistreated? Do I think I am a failure when people ‘run me down’? Have I ‘brought people down’ who challenged me e.g. to do better or to change my understandings or beliefs? Am I proud of my wealth – ‘pride comes before a fall’? Do I care for the poor and needy or just look after myself? Am I happy now but unprepared for the future? When praised, have I deserved it? Am I a true follower of Jesus?

Oratio: Pray that Jesus will be accepted as Son of God, Saviour of the world. Pray that we will make time to let the Lord speak to us. Pray that we will pray to Jesus to help us in times of illness and seek Anointing, without delay, when it is appropriate. Pray that we will be proud to take up our crosses in the way of Jesus’ Passion, death and resurrection. Pray that we will find fulfilment in doing the right thing. Pray that our lives may reflect Jesus’ love and compassion for us. Pray for responsible use of our financial resources. Pray to not undermine good people.

Contemplatio – Dwell in stillness, simply aware of the boundless expanse of mercy that surrounds you.

After your prayer – Make an option for the poor.

✍ Fr Joe

Luke 6: 17, 20 – 26

Jesus came down with the Twelve and stopped at a piece of level ground where there was a large gathering of his disciples with a great crowd of people from all parts of Judaea and from Jerusalem and the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon who had come to hear him and to be cured of their diseases.

Then fixing his eyes on his disciples he said:

‘How happy are you who are poor; yours is the kingdom of God.

Happy you who are hungry now: you shall be satisfied.

Happy you who weep now: you shall laugh.’

‘Happy are you when people hate you, drive you out, abuse you, denounce your name as criminal, on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice when that day comes and dance for joy, for then your reward will be great in heaven. This is the way their ancestors treated the prophets.’

‘But alas for you who are rich: you are having your consolation now.

Alas for you who have your fill now: you shall go hungry.

Alas for you who laugh now: you shall mourn and weep.’

‘Alas for you when the world speaks well of you! This was the way their ancestors treated the false prophets.’⁶

Notes:

N.B. Ordinary Time’s Sunday readings are suspended for the Seasons of Lent, and Easter. Also, the three feasts of Pentecost, Ascension, Trinity and Corpus Christi, ‘are’ in Ordinary Time and their readings replace the readings from Ordinary time. Effectively there is a movable gap in Ordinary Time readings each Year. This gap of 4 to 5 Sundays can range from the 6th to 12th Sundays in Ordinary Time; it depends on the movable Feast of Easter. Sunday readings that are skipped are still worth your (Lenten) reflection.

1 Jesus will give the name ‘Peter’ to Simon, Lk 6:14a.

2 The religious authorities taught the misconception that sin was the cause of sickness and disability. Yet the paralyzed man didn’t recover at once when Jesus forgave him. Of course Jesus’ primary purpose was to cure everybody of the spiritual illness caused by sinning.

3 The twelve apostles were a mixed crew; they were not the educated or people of renown. They included: fishermen, a Tax Collector, a rebel and a would-be traitor. These twelve apostles will be referred to as: ‘the Twelve’.

4 The verses omitted tell of what has already been happening. The crowds came to Jesus: to hear him, to be healed or to have evil spirits cast out, even to touch him – healing power went out from him.

5 Consider, Jesus named his disciples who were to be his apostles. The Twelve, he knew them personally!

6 The text following on from this text is about ‘loving your enemies’ i.e. further (counter-cultural) explanation regarding the way of love.