



5th Sunday Ord. Time, Yr B

Lectio Divina

Lectio: Jesus is continuing the first days of his time of ministry. He has chosen his first disciples and he has shown his authority which is built on the authority of the synagogue but goes beyond it. His word is powerful; by his word he can cast out devils. So having begun in the Capernaum Synagogue he goes from there to the house of two of his disciples¹, Simon and Andrew. His ministry is not limited to the Synagogue. He will preach and teach but he comes as Saviour too. A major part of this role is to save the people from the crosses of sickness and possession by the devil. But also saving and service² will be central to his ministry. Jesus is not just being taken up by the enthusiasm of those around him³. He makes time to pray and reflect alone. He makes choices for his ministry in accord with the Father's will. Jesus has come to form his disciples but this is only one aspect of his ministry. The disciples will learn by journeying with Jesus and seeing his choices and actions. Building on what they learn from Jesus, the disciples will be his agents to take his saving actions to everyone everywhere, not just to Jesus' disciples (especially not just to the people around Galilee⁴).

Read: Mark 1: 29 - 39

Meditatio: Is my faith only expressed when I go to church? Do I support fellow disciples (parishioners) by visiting them? How far do I go to care for the sick? Do I seek help for those who are ill? Do I wait till health issues are 'out of hand' before seeking help? How important to me is touch in caring for and/or relating to people? How has the Pandemic changed my interactions with others? How quickly do I take up opportunities to serve and help out? Do I pray for the sick? How appreciative am I for health workers who are dealing with all those who 'come to their doors' in this time of Pandemic? Do I know who Jesus truly is? How am I supporting the work of Jesus? How strong do I stand in the face of temptation? Where do I go to pray? Do I find that 'lonely places' help me to pray? Do I feel close to Jesus, to God, in my prayer times? How do I make decisions, especially when pressured by others? Do I pray before making important decisions? Do I do things only to please others? Do I only share about my faith with close confidants? How am I contributing to the spread of the Good News? Am I sharing my faith at least in my Galilee i.e. in my local neighbourhood? Is my faith seen in how I am committed to serving and helping others?

Oratio: Pray that our faith may flow out to the world from the strengthening and nourishment flowing from the Sacraments and our life in the Church. Pray that our faith may be seen in our homes as we care for each other there. Pray for the sick⁶ may they get the help they need in this time of Pandemic. Pray that health care may be available to everyone. Pray for those caught up in the grip of disasters⁷ e.g. bushfire and loss of homes in WA, Pandemic, coup in Myanmar, unrest and blizzard in USA, suppression in Russia. Pray that we will make time for prayer. Pray for a commitment to helping and service of others.

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

After your prayer – Find ways to help the 'Kingdom come' as in the Lord's Prayer.

✍ Fr Joe

Mark 1: 29 - 39

On leaving the synagogue, Jesus went with James and John straight to the house of Simon and Andrew. Now Simon's mother-in-law had gone to bed with a fever, and they told him about her straightaway. He went to her, took her by the hand and helped her up. And the fever left her and she began to wait on³ them.

That evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were sick and those who were possessed by devils. The whole town came crowding round the door, and he cured many who were suffering from diseases of one kind or another; he also cast out many devils, but he would not allow them to speak, because they knew who he was.

In the morning, long before dawn, he got up and left the house, and went off to a lonely place and prayed there⁵. Simon and his companions set out in search of him, and when they found him they said, 'Everybody is looking for you.' He answered, 'Let us go elsewhere, to the neighbouring country towns, so that I can preach there too, because that is why I came.' And he went all through Galilee⁴, preaching in their synagogues and casting out devils.

Notes:

1 Accompanied by the other two of his first disciples, James and John.

2 Service is the way of Jesus. This is mirrored in Simon's mother-in-law 'waiting on them'.

3 Opposition to Jesus has not yet arisen. Jesus' actions are greeted with enthusiasm and his reputation is rapidly spreading (cf Mk 1:28) i.e. the last words of last Sunday's gospel reading.

4 Jesus begins in Galilee but his salvation is for the whole of humanity throughout the world.

5 Jesus has an intimacy with God the Father. This intimacy would be something new for the Jewish people who were brought up on the texts of the Old Testament which can present God as a distant figure.

6 All the sick not just those suffering from COVID-19.

7 Possession by devils in our modern world could be compared to those suffering under natural and political disruptions.