



THE LORD'S DAY AT HOME

THE SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (B)

Sunday 14th February 2021

If you are housebound or self-isolating at this time, please use these prayers to unite yourself with the worship of the Universal Church, and your own Parish this Sunday. If alone, read or say these prayers quietly to yourself. If with another, or in a family, someone should read the "leader" parts, and others respond. It might be suitable to find a special, quiet place at home for your Sunday prayers.

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon

A: Be my protector, O God, a mighty stronghold to save me. For you are my rock, my stronghold! Lead me, guide me, for the sake of your name.

Sign of the Cross

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

A: Amen.

Introduction

L: Once more in the Gospel we hear Jesus exercising his ministry of healing. He proclaims that sickness is not God's plan by banishing a dreadful disease with such immediacy and ease. He shows God's compassion, which reaches beyond the boundaries that we humans sometimes create. In our prayers today, let us ask that we be both recipients *and* ministers of God's compassion. We begin by praising God's glory, revealed in Jesus our Lord:

Gloria

A: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Opening Prayer

L: Let us pray.

O God, who teach us that you abide in hearts that are just and true, grant that we may be so fashioned by your grace as to become a dwelling pleasing to you. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

A: Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Gospel Reading

Mark 1:40-45

A leper came to Jesus and pleaded on his knees: 'If you want to' he said 'you can cure me.' Feeling sorry for him, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him. 'Of course I want to!' he said. 'Be cured!' And the leprosy left him at once and he was cured. Jesus immediately sent him away and sternly ordered him, 'Mind you say nothing to anyone, but go and show yourself to the priest, and make the offering for your healing prescribed by Moses as evidence of your recovery.' The man went away, but then started talking about it freely and telling the story everywhere, so that Jesus could no longer go openly into any town, but had to stay outside in places where nobody lived. Even so, people from all around would come to him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

A: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Reflection

At Mass in Church this Sunday the first reading is rather peculiar – until you get to this Gospel. It is the instructions laid down by Moses for treating someone who has contracted leprosy (what today we call Hansen's disease): they are to be considered "unclean" and must live outside the camp, away from everyone else. Knowing this is

important, so that we really understand what Jesus is doing – this story works on several levels. This miracle first shows the simple kindness and love of Jesus for a person in need: the man has faith in him, but perhaps because of ill-treatment from others in the past (people who have only been following the Law of Moses), he is diffident, hesitant, unsure – "If you want to, you can cure me." How beautiful are the words of Jesus, resonating through the centuries to anyone who turns to him in time of need: "Of course I want to!" But there is another, deeper layer to this story: despite Jesus' warning, the man talks about the miracle everywhere, with the surprising result that Jesus almost seems to become a leper himself – "he could no longer go openly into any town, but had to stay outside in places where nobody lived." This is exactly the condition the man he cured had to endure before he was made whole again. So while Jesus restores his health (as well as probably returning the man to his home, his family and his job), he takes something of his suffering - his isolation - on himself. This is entirely consistent with what we believe of the Mission of Jesus: remember how in Lent and Holy Week we focus on the cross, the moment when Jesus "takes our sins upon himself" so that we can be renewed. Let's think today of the remarkable compassion of Jesus, who carries our sufferings, who bears our sins.

For our Younger Friends

We all know that Jesus is kind. But today we see just how kind he is! Jesus doesn't just say a nice word to a man suffering from a horrible disease: he touches him! People at that time would NEVER touch

someone with this disease, because it was so contagious. I bet that man felt amazing when Jesus touched him! But then Jesus does something even more amazing – he heals him, so the man can go back home to his family! Wow! We might wish we could heal people sometimes, and if you are young it is sometimes hard to know how to help someone. But there will always be something you can do – so this week, remember to be kind!

If gathering as a family, perhaps now continue to discuss what this Gospel passage means to you. If alone, think about what key message you take from the Scriptures today.

Profession of Faith

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Intercessions

L: Let us turn to our Father in prayer, through Jesus his Son, who came to show us how much God loves us and heals us.

Let us pray for all the sick, especially people suffering from diseases that isolate them from others, and for those who care for them. Lord, in your mercy.

A: Hear our prayer.

On this Valentine's Day, let us pray for couples preparing for marriage, especially for those whose marriages have been delayed. Lord, in your mercy:

A: Hear our prayer.

As Lent approaches this Wednesday, let us pray that we

may use this holy Season to grow closer to Jesus. Lord, in your mercy:

A: Hear our prayer.

We pray for all in need, especially the unemployed, those sick in mind or body, the homeless, and all in our world who face war, famine or disaster. Lord, in your mercy:

A: Hear our prayer.

Please add your own prayers for the needs of the Church, the world and your local community. You may wish to add particular prayers for family members, friends or neighbours in need at this time.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

L: At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

A: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

L: May our prayers this day, O Lord, cleanse and renew us and may they become for those who do your will the source of eternal reward. Through Christ our Lord.

A: Amen.

Before Spiritual Communion

L: Loving Father, you so loved the world that in your mercy you sent us the Redeemer, to live like us in all things but sin, so that you might love in us what you loved in your Son, by whose obedience we have been restored to those gifts of yours that, by sinning, we had lost in disobedience. At the Last Supper he showed the fullness of your love, as he gave his Body and Blood for his people. Even though we are not in Church, and not able to receive communion today, we open our minds and hearts now to your generous love and the gift of Jesus your Son, welcoming him spiritually into our lives.

Spiritual Communion

A: My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Holy Sacrament of the altar. I love you above all things and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and forever. Amen.

Pause for a moment of silent prayer and reflection.

Thanksgiving Psalm

L: You are my refuge, O Lord; you fill me with the joy of salvation.

A: You are my refuge, O Lord; you fill me with the joy of salvation.

L: Happy the man whose offence is forgiven,
whose sin is remitted.
O happy the man to whom the Lord imputes no guilt,
in whose spirit is no guile.

A: You are my refuge, O Lord; you fill me with the joy of salvation.

L: But now I have acknowledged my sins;
my guilt I did not hide.
I said: 'I will confess my offence to the Lord.'
And you, Lord, have forgiven the guilt of my sin.

A: You are my refuge, O Lord; you fill me with the joy of salvation.

L: Rejoice, rejoice in the Lord,
exult, you just!
O come, ring out your joy,
all you upright of heart.

A: You are my refuge, O Lord; you fill me with the joy of salvation.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

Final Prayer and Blessing

L: Let us pray.

Having fed spiritually upon these heavenly delights, we pray, O Lord, that we may always long for that food by which we truly live. Through Christ our Lord.

A: Amen.

L: May the Lord ✠ bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

A: Amen.

L: Let us bless the Lord!

A: Thanks be to God!