

Lectio Divina of 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time - B (February 7/2021)

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Opening Prayer: Merciful Lord, thank you for this prayerful moment along with our brothers and sisters to read and meditate on Your divine words in our Sunday liturgy. We seek your presence. Speak to us through your words. Grant us your grace. Pour out your spirit upon us. Give us the desire and will to pray more. Enlighten our minds with your truth. When life gives us more than we can stand, make us kneel to get your strength. Lord, You are the bringer of peace and tranquility in our troubled moments of our life. Guide us and teach us to be faithful in our prayer life. Place in our heart the deep desire to seek your presence in personal and family prayer. Let us be like Jesus who needed you and consulted you in prayer before every important decision in his life and ministry. Intervene in our lives and help us to navigate everything in our life with the help of our prayer for your blessings and guidance. This we pray in Jesus' most powerful name- Amen.

First Reading: A Reading from the book of Job 7:1-4, 6-7

Job spoke, saying: Is not man's life on earth a drudgery? Are not his days those of hirelings? He is a slave who longs for the shade, a hireling who waits for his wages. So I have been assigned months of misery, and troubled nights have been allotted to me. If in bed I say, "When shall I arise?" then the night drags on; I am filled with restlessness until the dawn. My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle; they come to an end without hope. Remember that my life is like the wind; I shall not see happiness again.

(The Word of the Lord/ Thanks be to God)

Commentary: Job expresses his deeper anguishes emotionally in physical terms at the experiences of troubles, calamities and bitterness in his life. At his trying moment, he desires to die and justifies his desire. After passionately complaining about his miseries, He turns to God and begs for the pardon of his sins and a speedy release out of his miseries. How do we handle our emotions when we face trials in life? Do we magnify them by talking over? Or surrender them to God's will?

Responsorial Psalm (147) *Praise the Lord, who heals the brokenhearted.*

Praise the Lord, for he is good; sing praise to our God, for he is gracious;
it is fitting to praise him. The Lord rebuilds Jerusalem;
the dispersed of Israel he gathers.

R. Praise the Lord, who heals the brokenhearted.

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.
He tells the number of the stars; he calls each by name.
R. Praise the Lord, who heals the brokenhearted.

Great is our Lord and mighty in power; to his wisdom there is no limit.
The Lord sustains the lowly; the wicked he casts to the ground.
R. Praise the Lord, who heals the brokenhearted.

Commentary: The psalmist describes the goodness and greatness of the Lord as he had *reasons* to praise Him who not only cares for communities, but also for individuals. The same God who cares for the lowly individual also knows and names all the stars. His majesty extends in both directions, from the span of the universe to the individual need. How can we give Joy to our Lord? We give Him greatest joy when we trust Him in our needs, praise Him in our blessings and worship Him in our life.

Second Reading: A reading from the first letter of St. Paul to Corinthians 9: 16-19, 22-23

Brothers and sisters: If I preach the gospel, this is no reason for me to boast, for an obligation has been imposed on me, and woe to me if I do not preach it! If I do so willingly, I have a recompense, but if unwillingly, then I have been entrusted with a stewardship. What then is my recompense? That, when I preach, I offer the gospel free of charge so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel. Although I am free in regard to all, I have made myself a slave to all so as to win over as many as possible. To the weak I became weak, to win over the weak. I have become all things to all, to save at least some. All this I do for the sake of the gospel, so that I too may have a share in it.
(The Word of the Lord/ Thanks be to God)

Commentary: Preaching the gospel was St. Paul's gift and calling and he says that he could not stop preaching even if he wanted to. He was driven by the desire to do what God wanted, using his gifts for God's glory. The goals of Paul's life were to glorify God and bring people to Christ. What special gifts God has given us? Are we motivated, like St. Paul, to honor God with our gifts?

Gospel Reading: A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark 1:29-39

On leaving the synagogue Jesus entered the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John. Simon's mother-in-law lay sick with a fever. They immediately told him about her. He approached, grasped her hand, and helped her up. Then the fever left her

and she waited on them. When it was evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were ill or possessed by demons. The whole town was gathered at the door. He cured many who were sick with various diseases, and he drove out many demons, not permitting them to speak because they knew him. Rising very early before dawn, he left and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed. Simon and those who were with him pursued him and on finding him said, "Everyone is looking for you." He told them, "Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come." So he went into their synagogues, preaching and driving out demons throughout the whole of Galilee.

(The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ / Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ)

Meditation: The threefold ministry of Jesus in his public life was Teaching, Preaching and Healing. We read Jesus' Purpose of his coming in Jn 10:10 "I came that they may have life and life in abundance". He went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people (Mt 4:23).

Jesus was a great preacher and teacher. The New Testament is full of His teachings, sayings, sermons and parables. One way or another, He is a teacher on every page of the NT. Wherever he went, he was preaching and the people followed him because his message brought them life, liberation, conversion.

Jesus was a great healer. He healed people from their physical, mental, and spiritual ailments. Today's gospel is a great example of his healing ministry. He healed the mother in law of Peter and all those who were possessed with demons. Where Jesus is, there is life, healing, power and wholeness of life.

Prayer is the secret of His successful mission: What could be the secret behind Jesus' healing? The gospel narrates: "*In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went to a deserted place, and there he prayed*" (Mark 1:35). Jesus spent quiet moments with God. He was connected to his source. He was in touch with his Father. This profound experience of deep prayer re-charged Jesus with the power of love and compassion, which flowed out of him in his ministry. Every time Jesus was at prayer, he was affirming that God was the epicenter of his life and ministry. Every time He was at prayer he was providing space for God to act in his life. Every time He was at prayer he was allowing God to energize his life. It was this connection with God that was the secret of his healing presence.

What is Jesus' message for us for this week?

1. **Healing Ministry:** We are called to be instruments of Jesus' healing work. Jesus sent out his disciples saying: Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give. (Mt 10:8) The command that was given to the disciples was faithfully carried out by the disciples. They brought out physical and spiritual healing in their ministry. As the successors of the apostles and their apostolic ministry, we are invited to take up their role of preaching, teaching and healing ministry. Healing ministry is not restricted to doctors, nurses, counselors, psychiatrists and confessors alone. Anyone who has love in heart, kindness and compassion in mind can do the healing ministry for the love of God and our neighbor. Let us also be instruments for Jesus' healing by caring for the sick and praying for their healing. There are so many broken families and people. Our relationship and support for them would be a great healing.
2. **Power of prayer:** *"Seven days with prayer make one WEEK and seven days without prayer make one WEAK"*. When the leaders of this country assembled to write the Constitution, Benjamin Franklin proposed that each session be opened with prayer. Franklin said, *"I have lived a long time, and the longer I live the more convincing proof I see of this truth that God governs the affairs of men."* Let us pray as if everything depends upon God and let us act as if everything depends on us because our action needs the support of Prayer and whatever we do with the support of prayer, then it becomes a prayerful act, an act of God, doing miracles in our life beyond our imagination and comprehension.

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, fill us with your Spirit, Peace, Love and Joy. Make us prayerful, purposeful and grateful in life. Help us to love others and lift them in their pains and agonies as you did to the ailing mother in law of St. Peter. Help us to be patient, kind, compassionate and not easily angered or offended. May we show the same grace and mercy to others as you show us through your body and blood and the word of God. Give us the wisdom to know when to speak and when to remain silent when dealing with difficult people and conflicting situations. May we glorify you in all that we think, say and do. Lord, You are my medicine when we are sick; You are our strength when we need help; You are life itself when we fear death and You are light when all is dark. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Have mercy on us. (Hail Mary/Priestly blessing)