



Encountering Christ

The Wednesday Prayer Custom for Homes, Schools & Parishes

Prayerfully preparing for Sunday Mass with special prayers for our school families



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.



Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present. Read the Gospel, 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.

1

Read The Gospel for Sunday 23rd June 2024 JESUS CALMS THE STORM

With the coming of evening, Jesus said to his disciples, 'Let us cross over to the other side.' And leaving the crowd behind they took him, just as he was, in the boat; and there were other boats with him. Then it began to blow a gale and the waves were breaking into the boat so that it was almost swamped. But he was in the stern, his head on the cushion, asleep. They woke him and said to him, 'Master, do you not care? We are going down!' And he woke up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Quiet now! Be calm!' And the wind dropped, and all was calm again. Then he said to them, 'Why are you so frightened? How is it that you have no faith?' They were filled with awe and said to one another, 'Who can this be? Even the wind and the sea obey him.'

Taken from Mark 4:35-41 Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

2

Reflect After reading the Gospel, did any words stand out? If they did, ponder or discuss them before proceeding with the reflection.

Jesus certainly seems to have chosen a pretty dim and unappreciative group of disciples. They do call him 'Master', but after all the wonders he has performed they still don't really trust him, and have no hesitation about addressing him rudely and brusquely. Did you think, 'Just like me'? Well, perhaps I am just as untrusting. We often behave as though Jesus were quietly snoozing, quite unconcerned about our troubles and worries, as we struggle hopelessly, up to our necks in the mud and sinking rapidly. However, once Jesus' attention has been roused, once the disciples have put their trust in him, he effortlessly remedies the situation. This incident is the climax of a series of wonders, when we see Jesus' authority gradually increasing. First he imperiously called the disciples and they followed. Then he taught authoritatively in the synagogue as no other had ever taught. Next he had the effrontery to forgive sins, as only God can do. Now he controls the elements. Only God controls the wind and the waves, as in the psalms God 'walks on the backs of the waves'. The disciples are awe-struck; they react with astonishment. But, just like me too, they soon forget again and are surprised when Jesus comes to their rescue.

What are the qualities required by a disciple of Christ? Why did Jesus choose such an unappreciative bunch?

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

3

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. Thank God for any insight you may have received.

Then ask God to bless you with a spiritual gift to help you act on any resolution you have made. Perhaps: love, hope, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, patience, humility, joy, forgiveness, self-control, courage, generosity, faith or something else.

4

Pray for Families

This Wednesday's word for our school families is CALM!

After praying for your loved ones, please remember to pray for our present and future Church, particularly for the families connected to our schools. You may want to conclude this special weekly time with a simple prayer such as:

St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church, pray for us. Mary, Star of Evangelisation, pray for us. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS †

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of **Sunday 23rd June 2024**



1st Reading: Job 38.1. 8-11

God Responds to Job's Agony

From the heart of the tempest the Lord gave Job his answer. He said: Who pent up the sea behind closed doors when it leapt tumultuous out of the womb, when I wrapped it in a robe of mist and made black clouds its swaddling bands; when I marked the bounds it was not to cross and made it fast with a bolted gate? Come thus far, I said, and no farther: here your proud waves shall break.



The Book of Job is a brilliant, evocative piece of writing, exposing in all its anguish the problem of the suffering of innocent people. It is a timeless plaint, expressing the incomprehension and frustration of all those who suffer undeservedly. It may well have been provoked by the second generation of exiles in Babylon, suffering for sins not their own. But Job articulates a problem which brings agony in every age. Why do I suffer? Why should I be subjected to long and humiliating illness? At the beginning of the saga, Job is so wound up that he curses the very day he was born. Throughout his struggle to understand, he has a love-hate relationship with God, wanting to be free of God's persecuting hand, but at the same time depending on and attached to that same protecting hand, confident that there is a solution. Despite what he sees as God's unacceptable bullying, he remains convinced that God's love will never forsake him. The two conflicting emotions boil together throughout the Book, until God gives his response, part of which we hear in today's reading. This final vision of God's incomparable wisdom and glory convinces Job that God's purposes are beyond human reasoning. Job is calmed and comforted by the experience of the awesome and incomprehensible glory of God.

How is the suffering of the innocent compatible with the idea of a loving God?



2nd Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:14-17

The New Creation

The love of Christ overwhelms us when we reflect that if one man has died for all, then all men should be dead; and the reason he died for all was so that living men should live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised to life for them.

From now onwards, therefore, we do not judge anyone by the standards of the flesh. Even if we did once know Christ in the flesh, that is not how we know him now. And for anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation; the old creation has gone, and now the new one is here.



The reading of Second Corinthians, begun before Lent, has been interrupted by the whole season of Lent and Eastertide with its accompanying festivals. At this point in the letter, Paul is explaining that the Resurrection of Christ has radically changed everything. In this new creation all our standards, hopes and expectations have undergone a transformation. He is perhaps already tilting at people who prided themselves on having known Jesus during his earthly life, and pitted their authority against Paul's own. Certainly later in the letter, he sets out to dispute the claims of some people of Jewish background who considered themselves 'super-apostles'. Salvation is not achieved by this knowledge of the earthly Jesus. The message of the gospel makes sense only in the light of the Resurrection. The Risen Christ is the firstborn from the dead, and his Resurrection is the model for ours. This is the ultimate answer to Job's question: whatever sorrows earthly life may bring, if we are baptised into Christ's death, we will also share his Resurrection. We already share Christ's life and are being transformed into him. The life we are experiencing now is only a preparation for its fulfilment in Christ's Resurrection.

Is Paul exaggerating when he says that with the Resurrection everything old has passed away?

...we will also share his Resurrection...

The Wednesday Word Connecting Home, School & Parish through the Word of God

**The Wednesday Word is under the patronage of St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church
Within the tradition of the Catholic Church, each Wednesday is dedicated to St Joseph**