

HOMILY FOR THE TWELFTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME
Sunday, 23 June 2024

Fr. Jim Fredericks

Part One: the readings for the day
Part Two: reflection on the readings
Part Three: guidelines for *lectio divina*

PART ONE: READINGS FOR THE DAY
Lectionary: 95

Reading I Jb 38:1, 8-11

The Lord addressed Job out of the storm and said:
Who shut within doors the sea,
when it burst forth from the womb;
when I made the clouds its garment
and thick darkness its swaddling bands?
When I set limits for it
and fastened the bar of its door,
and said: Thus far shall you come but no farther,
and here shall your proud waves be stilled!

Responsorial Psalm 107:23-24, 25-26, 28-29, 30-31

R. (1b) Give thanks to the Lord, his love is everlasting.
They who sailed the sea in ships,
trading on the deep waters,
These saw the works of the LORD
and his wonders in the abyss.
R. Give thanks to the Lord, his love is everlasting.
His command raised up a storm wind
which tossed its waves on high.
They mounted up to heaven; they sank to the depths;
their hearts melted away in their plight.
R. Give thanks to the Lord, his love is everlasting.
They cried to the LORD in their distress;
from their straits he rescued them,
He hushed the storm to a gentle breeze,
and the billows of the sea were stilled.
R. Give thanks to the Lord, his love is everlasting.
They rejoiced that they were calmed,
and he brought them to their desired haven.
Let them give thanks to the LORD for his kindness
and his wondrous deeds to the children of men.

R. Give thanks to the Lord, his love is everlasting.

Reading II 2 Cor 5:14-17

Brothers and sisters:

The love of Christ impels us,
once we have come to the conviction
that one died for all;
therefore, all have died.
He indeed died for all,
so that those who live
might no longer live for themselves
but for him who for their sake died and was raised.
Consequently, from now on we regard no one
according to the flesh;
even if we once knew Christ according to the flesh,
yet now we know him so no longer.
So whoever is in Christ is a new creation:
the old things have passed away;
behold, new things have come.

Alleluia Lk 7:16

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

A great prophet has risen in our midst
God has visited his people.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel Mk 4:35-41

On that day, as evening drew on,
Jesus said to his disciples:
"Let us cross to the other side."
Leaving the crowd,
they took Jesus with them in the boat just as he was.
And other boats were with him.
A violent squall came up
and waves were breaking over the boat,
so that it was already filling up.
Jesus was in the stern, asleep on a cushion.
They woke him and said to him,
"Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?"
He woke up,
rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Quiet! Be still!"
The wind ceased and there was great calm.
Then he asked them, "Why are you terrified?"

Do you not yet have faith?"
They were filled with great awe
and said to one another,
"Who then is this whom even wind and sea obey?"

PART TWO: HOMILY ON THE READINGS

From time to time, I talk with a rather likable young man who has a problem. He drinks to excess. When he does this, he becomes agitated and even belligerent. In fact, once, when he had too much to drink, he threatened to kill someone.

I regret to say that my young friend has been arrested and brought before a judge. The judge has ruled that he has engaged in "terrorist behavior" and sentenced him to time in the county jail up in Santa Rosa.

Just before his sentencing, my young friend said to me, with a depth of despair in his voice,

Father, is there something wrong with me? Am I mentally ill? Alcohol - it's just no good for me."

I was deeply impressed by this young man's contrition. But especially, I want you to pay attention to the way he is calling out to us in his suffering.

I thought of this fellow when I read the Gospel for today's mass.

Jesus and his disciples are on the far side of the Sea of Galilee. He says to them,

"Let us cross to the other side."

They get in a boat and set out. Then a violent storm comes up and the boat begins to founder. Curiously, Jesus is sound asleep in the boat's stern, oblivious to the storm. So the disciples call out to the Lord in their fear.

"Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?"

I hope you can see why I thought of this young fellow when I read the Gospel for today. The disciples call out to their teacher and my young friend is calling out to us,

“Father, is there something’s wrong with me?” Am I mentally ill? Alcohol – it’s just no good for me.”

I thought of other people too when I began to reflect on the story of the calming of the storm. I know another young man who took a painkiller that was supposed to be non-addictive after he had surgery. Now he is a ravaged soul living on the street in San Francisco.

These souls are being tossed about by a tempest. There is a storm blowing through their souls. If only we could calm this storm like Jesus commanded the winds to stop and the waves to subside on the Sea of Galilee.

But since this is not in our power to do, let me say this: At Saint Leo’s, we need to hang on to people who are afflicted – for whatever reason. We need to make room for families that have storms blowing through them and for souls being tossed about on angry seas.

When we hear Mark’s wonderful story about the calming of the storm, naturally, we think of ourselves as the disciples in the boat. Today, I want us to begin to think of ourselves as the boat itself. We need to be a boat for those who are drowning in the tossing waves. The Church, after all, has been called “the Bark of Peter” for many centuries.

The Church needs to be a place where people can get out of the roiling waters. And once they are in the boat, the Church needs to be a place where the afflicted can call out with the rest of us, knowing that the Lord is sleeping lightly at the back of the boat. In fact, he is already stirring.

In the midst of the tempest, the disciples called out to the Lord in their fear.

“Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?”

And my friend is calling out to us in his despair,

“Father, is there something’s wrong with me? Am I mentally ill? Alcohol - it’s just no good for me.”

In Mark’s story, the disciples were already in their boat. I want Saint Leo’s to be a place of welcome where those who need a boat can get out of the water and look to see who’s sleeping in the stern.

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De vez en cuando hablo con un joven bastante simpático que tiene un problema. El bebe en exceso. Cuando hace esto, se vuelve agitado e incluso beligerante. De hecho, una vez, cuando bebió demasiado, amenazó con matar a alguien.

Lamento informarles que mi joven amigo ha sido arrestado y llevado ante un juez. El juez dictaminó que participó en “comportamiento terrorista” y lo sentenció a pasar tiempo en la cárcel del condado de Santa Rosa.

Justo antes de su sentencia, mi joven amigo me dijo, con una profunda desesperación en su voz:

Padre, ¿me pasa algo? ¿Estoy mentalmente enfermo? Alcohol... simplemente no es bueno para mi.

Quedé profundamente impresionado por la contrición de este joven. Y quiero que Uds. Presten mucha atención a la forma en que él nos llama en su sufrimiento.

Pensé en este hombre cuando leí el Evangelio para la misa de hoy.

Jesús y sus discípulos están al otro lado del mar de Galilea. Él les dice,

“Crucemos al otro lado”.

Se suben a un barco y parten. Entonces se desata una violenta tormenta y el barco comienza a hundirse. Curiosamente, Jesús está dormido en la popa del barco,

ajeno a la tormenta. Entonces los discípulos invocan al Señor en su temor.

"!Maestro!
¿no te importa que estemos pereciendo?"

Espero que puedas ver por qué pensé en este joven cuando leí el Evangelio de hoy. Los discípulos llaman a su maestro y mi joven amigo nos llama a nosotros:

"Padre, ¿me pasa algo?" ¿Estoy mentalmente enfermo? Alcohol... simplemente no es bueno para mí".

El alma del joven está siendo sacudida por una tempestad. Hay una tormenta que atraviesa su alma. Si tan solo pudiéramos calmar esta tormenta como Jesús ordenó que los vientos se detuvieran y las olas amainaran en el Mar de Galilea.

Pero como esto no está en nuestro poder, permítanme decir esto: en Saint Leo, debemos aferrarnos a las personas que están afligidas, sea cual sea el motivo. Necesitamos dejar espacio para las familias que sufren tormentas y para las almas que son arrastradas por mares embravecidos.

Cuando escuchamos la maravillosa historia de San Marco sobre cómo el Señor calmo la tormenta, naturalmente pensamos en nosotros mismos como los discípulos en la barca. Hoy quiero que empecemos a pensar en nosotros como el barco mismo. Necesitamos ser un barco para aquellos que se están ahogando en las olas. Después de todo, la Iglesia ha sido llamada "la Barca de San Pedro" durante muchos siglos.

La Iglesia debe ser un lugar donde la gente pueda salir de las aguas turbulentas. Y una vez que están en la barca, la Iglesia necesita ser un lugar donde los afligidos puedan clamar, sabiendo que el Señor duerme ligeramente en la parte trasera de la barca. De hecho, ya se está moviendo.

Entonces los discípulos clamaron al Señor en su temor.

"Maestro, ¿no te importa que estemos pereciendo?"

Y mi amigo nos llama en su desesperación,

"Padre, ¿me pasa algo? ¿Estoy mentalmente enfermo? Alcohol... simplemente no es bueno para mí".

En la historia de San Marco, los discípulos ya estaban en su barca. Quiero que San León sea un lugar de acogida donde quien necesita un barco pueda salir del agua y mirar quién duerme en la popa.

PART THREE: INSTRUCTIONS FOR *LECTIO DIVINA*

I suggest that you use the readings and my reflections as an opportunity for practicing *lectio divina* ("divine reading"). This is an ancient spiritual practice that started with the great monks in the Syrian and Egyptian desert back in the early days of the Church. It is really quite simple.

Step one: calm your mind (my Buddhist friends describe the mind as "a mango-tree full of chattering monkeys"). I find that paying attention to your breath for a few minutes is a practical and effective way to do this.

Step two: read the readings slowly and attentively. Savor the words as if you were tasting a great Pinot Noir. Don't rush. You are not looking for information or instructions. You are making friends with a sacred text which will bless you abundantly if you will only open your heart to it and let it speak to you. In *lectio divina*, we are not actually "reading" the Bible. Rather, we are "listening" to the Bible as the sacred words speak to us.

Step three: repeat step two.

Step four: read the homily on the readings.

Step five: Ask yourself a few questions:

- What particular words in the readings call out to me most forcefully?

- What is going on in my life such that these words call to me so forthrightly?
- How am I being asked to change, both interiorly and exteriorly?
- In light of this *lectio divina*, how am I being invited to be of service to the world today?