

February 24, 2019

Seventh Week in Ordinary Time



Readings for the week of February 24, 2019

Sunday: 1 Sm 26:2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23/Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 8, 10, 12-13 [8a]/1 Cor 15:45-49/Lk 6:27-38

Monday: Sir 1:1-10/Ps 93:1ab, 1cd-2, 5 [1a]/Mk 9:14-29

Tuesday: Sir 2:1-11/Ps 37:3-4, 18-19, 27-28, 39-40 [cf. 5]/Mk 9:30-37

Wednesday: Sir 4:11-19/Ps 119:165, 168, 171, 172, 174, 175 [165a]/Mk 9:38-40

Thursday: Sir 5:1-8/Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6 [40:5a]/Mk 9:41-50

Friday: Sir 6:5-17/Ps 119:12, 16, 18, 27, 34, 35 [35a]/Mk 10:1-12

Saturday: Sir 17:1-15/Ps 103:13-14, 15-16, 17-18 [cf. 17]/Mk 10:13-16

Next Sunday: Sir 27:4-7/Ps 92:2-3, 13-14, 15-16 [cf. 2a]/1 Cor 15:54-58/Lk 6:39-45

“Give, and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.”

A Good Measure

Seventh Sunday of Ordinary time – Luke 6:27-38

“Give, and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.”

I find these last couple of verses in this week’s gospel to be rich and full of meaning. A good measure, at the time of Jesus, would possibly have been the measure of grain or seeds into the fold of fabric that came up and over one’s belt, also known as “the lap”. To have this fold filled with as much grain as it would contain would have been considered a generous and bountiful gift.

The source of grain from a merchant in the market place or in the landlord’s field, would have been an opportunity to be “short-changed” if the measure was randomly poured into the vessel or lap of the buyer. For one to receive a good measure one would be diligent to make sure that all the chaff and air between the seed was removed by shaking and pressing. That way the measure would end up containing more than a measure carelessly obtained.

Jesus uses this well-known understanding of commerce to continue his teaching on how his disciples are to act in their ministry. **“To you who hear I say, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.”** Jesus is asking us to sift out the old way of revenge and retaliation with a new measure of love.

Jesus asks us to love beyond our own small boundaries of family, friends and those who treat us well. We are to love our enemies. We are called to go beyond the “chaff and air” that separates the kernels and the seeds of human life and to be generous as God is generous.

This is no easy task. Strife, conflict and revenge seem the norm today. It was at Jesus’ time as well. Greed, persecution, prejudice and hate have dominated the human soul since the beginning of time. That is why Jesus’ teaching this week is so difficult.

“But rather, love your enemies and do good to them, and lend expecting nothing back; then your reward will be great and you will be children of the Most High, he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.”

Jesus’ summation is that we must stop judging especially those who do us wrong. We must not condemn even if we are condemned. And most importantly, we must forgive as we wish to be forgiven. It is only through love of enemies that the measure of how we live will be balanced into a just and good measure of Christian life.

Blessings!


Sue Schettler