

4-6-2022

14th Sunday in Ordinary Time - 3 July 2022

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Recommended Citation

Moore, Gerard. "14th Sunday in Ordinary Time - 3 July 2022." *Pastoral Liturgy* 52, no. 3 (2021): 1-5. <https://researchonline.nd.edu.au/pastoral-liturgy/vol52/iss3/10>

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3 July 2022

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reflection by Gerard Moore

Introduction

As the Australian church takes up the challenge of discipleship, our readings offer a series of perspectives on the abundance of divine love, the centrality of the cross and the power of healing entrusted by Christ to the community. Today we also celebrate national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday.

Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you call us to be your disciples.

Lord, have mercy.

You bring us peace and mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

You gift us with your Spirit.

Lord, have mercy.

Collect

The oration

O God, who in the abasement of your Son
have raised up a fallen world,
fill your faithful with holy joy,
for on those you have rescued from slavery to sin
you bestow eternal gladness.

The collect is a petition for joy. In the prayer the community, in the light of Christ's self-abasement, reflects upon God's gracious act of raising up all creation. This specifically is seen to include the rescue of humanity from servitude to sin. The petition for eternal gladness matches the rescue itself: slavery to sin would have been a permanent state without this divine intervention. The prayer is built around a number of contrasts. The abasement of the Son leads to the raising of a fallen world. The state of slavery is in contrast to that of holy joy. This joy on earth is heightened when seen in light of the coming state of eternal gladness. In the ancient sources this joy is associated most

particularly with worship and devotion. Our celebrations ought to be characterised by joy!
(Gerard Moore)

First Reading

Isaiah 66:10-14c

The prophet Isaiah teaches us of abundance of God, and the love with which it is shared, through the image of overflowing breast feeding of the mother to her infant.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 65:1-7, 16, 20. R.v.1

Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

The first reading and the psalm rejoice in what God provides which heralds the rejoicing of the disciples in the gospel.

Second Reading

Galatians 6:14-18

Paul's mission is based in the cross, and discipleship is understood by the Apostle as bearing the marks of Christ on his body.

Gospel Reading

Luke 10:1-12, 17-20

The Gospel continues the theme of discipleship and makes a number of points that are important as the Australian Church wrestles with the challenge of missionary discipleship.

Reflection

The poet Isaiah offers us a vision of the reign of God. The abundance of God, and the love with which it is shared, is captured in the overflowing breast feeding of the mother to her infant. This is the abundance of the divine, this is the self-giving of God, this is the warmth and love and comfort which characterises the reign of God. This is a symbol of the power of God.

It is this image of power that ties the reading from the prophet to the Gospel. There the seventy-two, sent in pairs, feel the power of the Spirit as they cure the sick in the villages to which they are sent.

Our continuation this week from the Letter to the Galatians fits well with the discipleship themes in the Gospel. It brings to the fore some other aspects of being a missionary, as understood by Paul through the trials of his own life.

Paul's mission is based in and of the cross. It is freed by the cross from the limitations of merely following the Law and opens onto a new creation. For Paul discipleship in Christ

has a cost, and is a promise of a new future. In the present, however, it means bearing the marks of Christ on his body. An interesting parallel to this is our own deep practice of marking our bodies with the Sign of the Cross: we begin most of our prayers with this embodiment of the Cross.

The Gospel continues the theme of discipleship and bears a number of points that are important as the Australian Church wrestles with the challenge of missionary discipleship.

There is a question here from Jesus to us about who are disciples and who are entrusted with the message. For too long the Australian Church has understood discipleship in terms of the apostles and of their successors, the clergy. It is not the only model, as Jesus makes clear. There is something of a play in the number 72, and its factor-based resonance with the 12 tribes of Israel and the 12 apostles. Jesus is willing to send out 'others' and to empower them.

It is not a naïve sending! There are rules for disciples that still make sense today, if not more so. First up, they are authorised and then allowed the freedom to be ministers; they are trusted. And they are sent in pairs. This is a communal effort, but also a wise one. The fellowship keeps them strong in faith and is a hand brake on possible abuse. The missionaries stay in the first house they enter: they are not to go seeking the best place or move to another house when they get a better offer! The true missionary is content with what God provides, not with what their appetites seek or any misplaced sense of importance. Their journey is one of dependence on God: they take no gold and eat what is set before them.

Not all the missionary advice is consistent. In our reading last week, the Samaritan village was left alone, even though it rejected Jesus. This reading offers a second approach: those who do not accept the offer of the missionaries are treated as Sodom. This aspect of the text may require more appreciation and discernment!

Interestingly the pairs bring healing. They cure the sick. Curiously there is no interrogation on Jesus' part about what they preached or how they set about proclaiming the message. Rather the key focus is on presence and healing. With this, the disciples recognise that they brought the power of the name of Jesus. This theology of the divine name is not so strong in our theological imagination but is a recognition that in speaking in Jesus' name, they are speaking in the name of God. With this is their own sense of what Jesus has done: he has given them power, and they have brought healing and the Spirit. These intrepid missionaries have experienced the in-bringing of the reign of God and have been its agents. Their journeying has been a success.

It is worth bringing together the different strains from the readings as the real work of the Plenary Council begins the Second Assembly. The first reading and the Gospel both hold a vision of the reign of God. We have the abundance, self-giving and love of the breastfeeding mother, and the subjection of the bad spirits to the healing hands and words of the seventy-two. There is the trust of Jesus in his followers, and an empowerment of them to heal beyond our current ecclesial boundaries. And with Paul we have a missionary spirituality around the Cross: we bear the Cross of Christ in our bodies. There is much here for us as we pursue the call to be missionary disciples.

Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction

We are called to be fruitful in our discipleship and so we place our needs before God.

Petitions

Let us pray for the Plenary Council members as they begin the Second Assembly this week. May they have the courage to hear what the Spirit is saying and work for the strengthening of the Catholic Church in Australia that it will become more Christ-centred and missionary.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Let us pray for the Universal Church as Pope Francis leads us towards the 2023 Synod. May the whole Church hear the call of the Spirit to be missionaries to the world as we journey together.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Let us pray for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. May they, as the first carers of this land, be respected, valued and drawn more fully into the life of our Church. May the Plenary Council resolve to listen and respond to the voice of First Nations peoples.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Let us pray for world leaders that they may focus on the care of people through the ongoing traumas of pandemic, war and climate change. Give them strength of vision and clarity to see the needs of people rather than power and wealth.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Let us pray for those who work to build the environment in which we live. Give them the grace to be creative and to serve the true needs of the people who will inhabit the buildings to work, study or live.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Let us pray for all those who suffer at the hands of others through domestic violence, racism, ageism, sexism or condemnation of any kind. May their burdens be eased through the growth of tolerance and love in our community.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion

Loving God, We rejoice in your abundance and know that you will listen to these needs we bring in prayer through the power of the Spirit and in the name of Jesus, the Christ.

Amen.

Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

Title	AOV1	AOV2	AOVK	AOVNG	GA	CWB	CWBII	S&S1	S&S2
All you nations, sing out your joy					353	616	347		
Come to me, all who labour (Norbet)	37				228	660			
Come to me, all who labour (Anon.)							470		
Dona nobis pacem	106								
Forth in the peace of Christ we go					495	681	489		
Go now, you are sent forth						690	494		
Go out and tell									344
God has chosen me	21				497		495		345
Here I am, Lord	90				496		518		
I rejoiced	69								
Let all the earth								69	
Let all the earth cry out									261
Let us go rejoicing					72		536		
Lord, you give the great commission					313		308		
Love is his word					462	743	553		
Seek ye first	48				456		594	160	
The voice of God					476	835	621		
We are called to serve								139	
We have no other boast					491		502		
We will bring your peace			69						
When I survey the wondrous cross					330	862	329		

Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

Psalm 65: *Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.*

	CWB	GA	JOBC	JOBF	LPC	PM
Psalm 65	308	45	pg. 77		pg. 113	pg. 52

Music selections by Michael Mangan

Sing out with joy (FWS) *Based on Ps 65/66* [Gathering]

Mercy shall be yours (DOM) [Gathering, Recessional]

Taste and see (FWS) *Based on Ps 33/34* [Communion]