

Praying the Scripture - a few simple steps at home

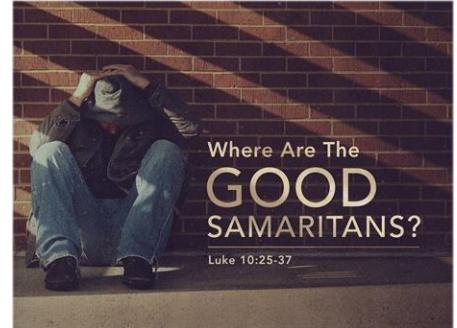
Sunday 10th July 2022

1. Start with stillness and quietening down; then gently read the passage, noticing any feelings and connections to your own experience.
2. Read the passage again and spend understand. *The notes in your Bible may be of help at this point.*
3. Read the passage a third time - wondering how you yourself might pray the text over the next few days.
4. Over the next week, set aside times to come back more than once to the passage. You could read it all or part of it again, slowly. Perhaps there is a special word for you in this passage of Scripture? Keep this word or phrase in your thoughts and gently repeat it, bringing it to mind and allowing God to speak to you in your heart.
5. Finally, come back to the text to conclude: What is God in this scripture asking of you this week? What is the one challenge, one little change you are asked to make or the thing you have been asked to do? Then say a prayer of thanksgiving for the good news in the passage. End in quiet prayer.



THIS SUNDAY'S GOSPEL – Luke 10: 25-37

The good Samaritan
Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he said, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?' He said to him, 'What is written in the law? What do you read there?' He answered, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.' And he said to him, 'You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.'



But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?' Jesus replied, 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, "Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend." Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'

A Short Thought

The question raised in today's Gospel is never out of date or out of season. It is perfectly natural to think of our neighbours as literally the people next door, people "like us" as we say. But, that is to stay well within our comfort zone and, as Jesus puts it sharply elsewhere, "even the Gentiles love those who love them." Far more is demanded, especially in today's context of spiralling migration, with all its challenges of finance, housing, income, education of the young, work for the able and so forth. While bearing in mind the practical and social consequences, the whole thrust of the Gospel passage is to see my neighbour as any fellow human being in need.

If one of us were to pose Jesus the question "Who is my neighbour?" what would he answer? He would certainly remind us that our neighbour is not only our fellow countrymen but also those outside our community, even those who our community shuns or excludes! Not only Christians but Muslims also, not only Catholics but Protestants also, not only those with faith, but those with none also. But he would immediately add that this is not the most important thing. The most important thing is not to know who my neighbour is but to see whose neighbour I can be here and now, for whom I can be the Good Samaritan.

SOME POINTERS FOR PRAYER

1. Today's gospel brings us right to the heart of what a Christian life involves: love of God and of neighbour. Jesus tells us that having life both now and in the future is the fruit of living in a spirit of love. How have you experienced the power of love given and received to be a source of life and vitality?
2. Pope Francis, preaching on this reading, said: "The priest and the Levite see but ignore; they look but they do not offer to help. Yet there is no true worship if it is not translated into service to neighbour. Let us never forget this: before the suffering of so many people exhausted by hunger, violence and injustice, we cannot remain spectators." What are your thoughts?
3. Read the parable slowly - Look at the needs you see around you, both near and far. In your family, in your neighbourhood, in my country, in the world. Ask Jesus in prayer – "Who is my neighbour?", "Who are the modern-day good Samaritans?"
4. Jesus seems to 'raise the bar' when he is speaking to individuals. When he preaches generally to the crowd, he invites and encourages. But to the individuals who offer themselves, or ask further questions, he challenges them to go that bit further. Is this my experience of being a Christian? Where do I find myself being 'stretched'?
5. Take a few moments to recall the people who are and have been an inspiration to you by the care and attention they have given to others. Give thanks for them.
6. Hear Jesus saying to you, 'Go and do likewise.' Where are you inspiring others?

Prayer -

Christ you draw near to us, God of mercy and compassion, lifting us out of death, binding up our wounds, and nursing our spirits back to health. Let such a tenderness as yours compel us to go and do likewise. You who live and reign with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit forever and ever, **Amen**

Prayer in these uncertain times

We pray for all those in our country and throughout the world suffering from the Corona Virus. May its victims and their families be strengthened by the support of our community of faith and restored soon to full health. We also pray for our leaders and medical personnel who deal with the virus. May we keep calm and may we join together in solidarity with care and compassion to tackle this emergency. This we ask in confidence through Christ Our Lord. Amen

We pray for Ukraine. For all of humanity distorted by war. For all the lives lost, homes seized, and peace broken. May the Spirit of comfort and compassion envelop all who dwell in fear. May peace prevail and justice reign. May love always be the guide and measure of our actions and responses. Amen



Go and Do Likewise
Luke 10:25-37

