

11th Week in Ordinary Time

BE STILL

Take a moment to allow whatever is in your heart to rise and offer your thoughts to the loving care of the Lord today.

Gathering Prayer

Loving God,
Draw near to us as we sit, think and reflect upon your word.
Open our hearts in order that we can hear what it is that you are whispering to us today.
Amen.

THIS WEEK

- 21 June: St Aloysius Gonzaga (Memorial)

THE GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew (5:43-48)

Jesus said to his disciples:
“You have heard that it was said,
You shall love your neighbour as your enemy.
But I say to you, love your enemies
and pray for those who persecute you,
that you may be children of your heavenly Father,
for he makes sun rise on the bad and the good,
and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust.
For if you love those who love you, what recompense will you have?
Do not the tax collectors do the same?
And if you greet your brothers only,
what is unusual about that?
Do not pagans do the same?
So be perfect just as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Ponder

Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013) noted that in the presence of God, during a recollected reading of the text, it is good to practice *Lectio Divina* – the reading of God’s word in prayer asking that it ‘enlighten and renew’ us. The following questions may help with this:

- Lord, what does this text mean to me?
- What is it about my life that you want me to change by this text?
- What troubles me about this text?
- Why am I not interested in this?
- What do I find pleasant about this text?
- What is it about this word that moves me?
- What attracts me?
- Why does it attract me?

Reflect

There are times in life when we feel overwhelmed by injustice. And we may wonder – how is it that this same sun, moon and stars can shine upon this person who has hurt me, or who has perpetrated such evil. This week, Matthew’s daily gospel offers readers insights into the imagination God has for the world. They may also challenge our understandings about God – God loves everyone equally. The rich and the poor, those who strive for goodness and those who do not, those who are successful and those who are not. Perhaps the message we can take into our hearts this week is that it is through prayer that we change ourselves – through prayer, we have the opportunity to develop a discerning and listening heart which is big enough to hold the complexities of world and to allow us to also pray for those who hurt us.

RESPOND

Pray

Loving God,
Help me to stay close to you
To be slow to judge
And quick to forgive, console and encourage.
Amen.