



Jesus told John the Baptist's friends to go back to John and tell him about all the good things happening- people were being healed, helped, and given hope. Jesus said this was the Good News from God.

Can you think of a person—a parent, a teacher, or a friend—who helps you see good things and reminds you that Jesus brings hope and joy?

Draw or write about a time when you heard or shared good news that made someone happy.



Father, I thank You for the gift of this story which has helped me see the joyful presence of Your Son in my life.

Action: this week I will try to show love by...

For more information check out our website: www.lectiominion.com

E. lectiominion@gmail.com

LECTIO DIVINA

Living the Word

MEDITATING ON THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

Year A - 3rd Sunday in Advent

A resource for personal, family and community prayer.



"...happy is the one who does not lose faith in me."

Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11

You are invited to read the Gospel passage attentively, respectfully and reverently as a gift of God.

John in his prison had heard what Christ was doing and he sent his disciples to ask him, "Are you the one who is to come, or have we got to wait for someone else?" Jesus answered, "Go back and tell John what you hear and see; the blind see again, and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised to life and the Good News is proclaimed to the poor; and happy is the one who does not lose faith in me."

As the messengers were leaving, Jesus began to talk to the people about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swaying in the breeze? No? Then what did you go out to see? A man wearing fine clothes? Oh no, those who wear fine clothes are to be found in palaces. Then what did you go out for? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and much more than a prophet: he is the one of whom scripture says: 'Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way before you.' I tell you solemnly, of all the children born of women, a greater than John the Baptist has never been seen; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he is."

Background to Gospel passage

Where does this happen? Jesus is ministering

in Galilee. John is now in prison for having spoken against Herod who had married the wife of his brother Philip.

When does it happen? Jesus' ministry is well underway in Galilee. Word has reached John about the work of Jesus and the significant impact he is having in the lives of the people.

Who is there? Followers of John the Baptist who are sent by John to question Jesus about his own identity. Jesus then converses with his own followers about the greatness of John the Baptist.

What happens? Jesus invites John's messengers to report on what they "see and hear". Transformed by their saving and liberating encounter with Jesus, the blind, the lame, the lepers and the forgotten ones in Jewish society experience a new sense of their dignity and value as children of God. Jesus stresses that this saving activity requires faith in the hand of God at work.

Furthermore, Jesus celebrates the integrity and courage of John the Baptist. While recognising John as "the greatest" prophet of his day, Jesus also believes that the least in the kingdom is greater than he is. In other words, those who encounter God's saving work in Jesus are seeing something that those of previous generations did not see.

Suggested Guidelines to help you recognise this passage in your life experience.

“John in his prison”

Can you enter into the experience of John the Baptist by remembering a time when you languished in a prison of loneliness, darkness, emptiness or rejection? Remember how you waited and prayed to find some glimmer of hope.

“Is Jesus the one who is to come?”

Can you remember a critical moment in your life when you were asking yourself the question: “Did I make the right choices in my life - regarding occupation, career, commitments in marriage, relationships or causes I espoused, or did I make a mistake?”

“The blind see again, the lame walk..”

Can you remember an experience of the little ones in society being lifted up in their dignity, beauty and creativity, which you now recognise as the liberating work of God?

“..the least in the kingdom is greater than he is.”

Can you identify an experience of what it means to be Church today that previous generations, even the greatest among them, could never have imagined, for example, mercy for unmarried mothers, compassion for the divorced and separated, working in harmony with neighbours of other Christian traditions and religions, or involvement of lay people in the leadership of the Church?

What does this Gospel remind me of? *Where was it? When was it? Who was there? What happened?*

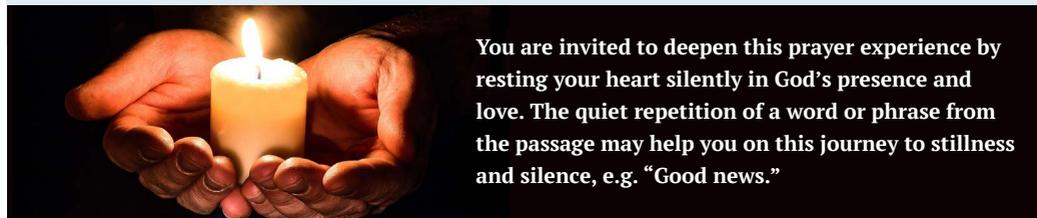
Now I can see that God’s loving presence and action were in that life experience.

Prayer Response - you are invited to respond in prayer in your own words.

Heavenly Father, I thank you for the times when I have experienced this Gospel in my life...

Heavenly Father, I am sorry for the times I have fallen short of living this Gospel...

Heavenly Father, please help me to live this Gospel...



You are invited to deepen this prayer experience by resting your heart silently in God’s presence and love. The quiet repetition of a word or phrase from the passage may help you on this journey to stillness and silence, e.g. “Good news.”

An Invitation to Reflect

What new insight has the Gospel opened my eyes to see?

Action

This week I will try to live the Gospel by...

Thought for the week

The lifting up of the little ones of our world is a sign of hope for all humanity. *Rest in this truth, hold it in prayer and trust that it will bear fruit in your life.*