

# The Living Word

**Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

**2 March 2025**

## **First Reading Sir 27:4-7**

*Do not praise someone before they have spoken.*

In a shaken sieve the rubbish is left behind,  
so too the defects of a man appear in his talk.

The kiln tests the work of the potter,  
the test of a man is in his conversation.  
The orchard where the tree grows is judged on the quality of its fruit,  
similarly a man's words betray what he feels.

Do not praise a man before he has spoken,  
since this is the test of men.

## **Responsorial Psalm**

**Ps 91:2-3. 13-16. R. See v.2**

*(R.) Lord, it is good to give thanks to you.*

1. It is good to give thanks to the Lord to make music to your name, O Most High,  
to proclaim your love in the morning and your truth in the watches of the night. (R.)
2. The just will flourish like the palm-tree and grow like a Lebanon cedar. (R.)
3. Planted in the house of the Lord they will flourish in the courts of our God,  
still bearing fruit when they are old, still full of sap, still green,  
to proclaim that the Lord is just.  
In him, my rock, there is no wrong. (R.)

## **Second Reading 1 Cor 15:54-58**

*Victory has been given to us through Jesus Christ.*

When this perishable nature has put on imperishability, and when this mortal nature has put on immortality, then the words of scripture will come true: Death is swallowed up in victory. Death, where is your victory? Death, where is your sting? Now the sting of death is sin, and sin gets its power from the Law. So let us thank God for giving us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Never give in then, my dear brothers, never admit defeat; keep on working at the Lord's work always, knowing that, in the Lord, you cannot be labouring in vain.

## **Gospel Acclamation Phil 2:15-16**

*Alleluia, alleluia!*

*Shine on the world like bright stars; you are offering it the word of life.*

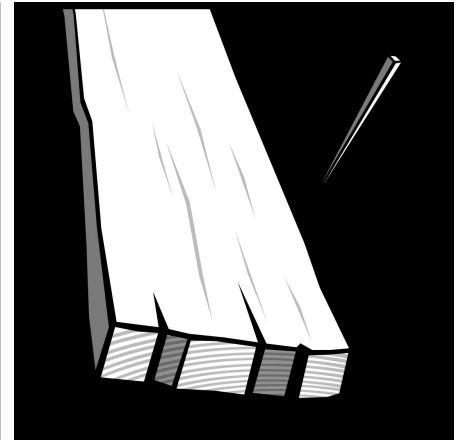
*Alleluia!*

## **Gospel Lk 6:39-45**

*A person speaks from what is in his heart.*

Jesus told a parable to his disciples, 'Can one blind man guide another? Surely both will fall into a pit? The disciple is not superior to his teacher; the fully trained disciple will always be like his teacher. Why do you observe the splinter in your brother's eye and never notice the plank in your own? How can you say to your brother, "Brother, let me take out the splinter that is in your eye," when you cannot see the plank in your own? Hypocrite! Take the plank out of your own eye first, and then you will see clearly enough to take out the splinter that is in your brother's eye.

'There is no sound tree that produces rotten fruit, nor again a rotten tree that produces sound fruit. For every tree can be told by its own fruit: people do not pick figs from thorns, nor gather grapes from brambles. A good man draws what is good from the store of goodness in his heart; a bad man draws what is bad from the store of badness. For a man's words flow out of what fills his heart.'



## **Reflection by Fr Michael Tate**

A Greek word for an actor is *hypokrites*, and Jesus often uses it in a disparaging way. How often have we heard the sad, sometimes angry, remark by someone let down by a person they trusted: 'It was all a big act'. Eventually, the true character of the dishonest or manipulative person is revealed. All the acting in the world will not forever suppress what is bound to overflow from the heart.

This takes us to the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus pronounces a blessing on 'the pure in heart, for they will see God'. This does not describe those who are ritually or sexually pure, but those who, at the core of their being, are not actors. There is no duplicity or camouflage, no lie or deception clouding the heart. Because of this, Jesus says they are well prepared to see God because they do not have the great plank of acting in their eye.

Of course, we already see God in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, so that we can pray with the clear-sighted Richard, Bishop of Chichester in 1253: 'O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may I know thee more clearly, love thee more dearly and follow thee more nearly, day by day.'

We could pause for a moment and resolve to make that prayer with a pure heart. Then, when we grace-fully share Christ's resurrection life in Heavenly Glory, in the embrace of Divine Love we shall truly see the Triune God face-to-face!

**Disciples or Mask-Wearers?**

In ancient Greece actors wore masks which concealed the face. One may say they were 'two-faced'. They were called 'hypocrites', and we derive our word and the idea of 'hypocrite' from that. As did Jesus.

He could always see through the veneer which people (such as you and I) present to the outside world, and his gaze would (and still can) penetrate through to the heart - the core of the personality.

For us, judging the heart of someone is fraught with risk. As Jesus humorously put it, how readily we see the smallest splinter of sawdust in someone else's eye, and in super-critical mode fail to see the plank of wood which impairs and distorts our vision. We should not rush to judgment.

The fact is that only the gaze of God can really penetrate to the heart of someone. We know that the gaze of Jesus, Who is God, is always a loving gaze visualising a heart open to salvation. (Mk 10:17-22)

This is one of the reasons why recent Popes have opposed capital punishment. Time must be given for the heart of the convicted criminal to respond to that loving gaze. And it leaves the Final Judgment, even of the murderer, to God.

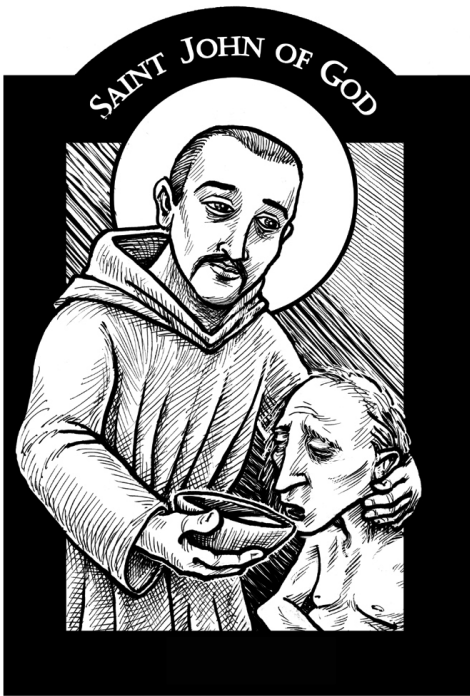
Listen to the dying moments of Our Lord. His loving gaze penetrated beyond the masks and actions of his tormentors and focused on their hearts. Then he cried out this plea: 'Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.'

We are all conscious of the times we have fallen short of the practice and teaching of our Master despite our praying: 'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.'

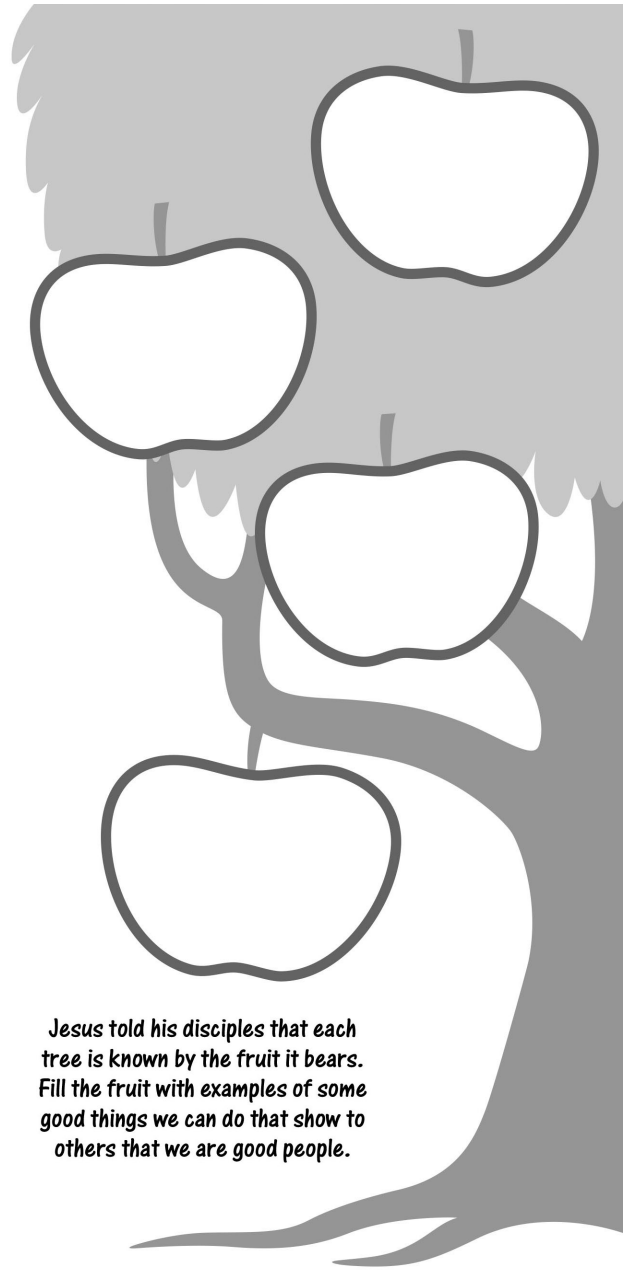
We could pause for a moment to pray that The Teacher's loving gaze fall upon us to make us whole-hearted disciples willing 'to be formed by divine teaching'.

mtate@bigpond.com

The psalm responses are from the English Translation of the Lectionary for the Mass © 1981 International Committee on English in the Liturgy Inc. (ICEL). All rights reserved. The psalm texts, from *The Psalms, A New Translation*, © 1963 by The Grail, England and used by permission of the publishers. The scriptural quotations are taken from the *Jerusalem Bible*, published and copyrighted 1966, 1967 and 1968 by Darton Longman and Todd Ltd and Doubleday & Co Inc. and used by permission of the publishers.  
© 2017 Creative Ministry Resources Pty Ltd  
All use must be in accordance with your user licensing agreement.



**S**t John of God was originally a soldier who fought for Spain against the French and the Turks. Around the age of forty, he repented his former life and converted to a life of service to God. In 1539 he bought a house and gave shelter and care to the sick and needy. After his death, John's followers formed a Religious Order of hospitalers, the Brothers of St John of God. He is the patron saint of nurses, hospitals and the sick.



Jesus told his disciples that each tree is known by the fruit it bears. Fill the fruit with examples of some good things we can do that show to others that we are good people.

## Wordsearch

Try to find these words:



character  
eye  
faithful  
log  
palm  
speck  
students  
teacher  
test  
tree  
true  
words

S	W	R	T	Y	S	F	G	E	D	U	Y	P	X	E
D	A	J	D	I	P	X	O	H	G	R	K	F	T	Y
E	D	F	T	R	E	T	K	F	S	W	A	H	B	E
F	S	A	L	O	C	V	A	Z	T	I	V	D	F	D
X	K	I	G	S	K	R	S	T	U	D	E	N	T	S
Z	G	T	W	H	C	B	U	L	H	K	Y	W	B	T
T	U	H	T	I	C	H	A	R	A	C	T	E	R	P
E	R	F	B	G	Y	C	W	Y	B	R	A	J	K	A
A	I	U	C	L	O	G	X	D	I	P	V	F	T	W
C	A	L	J	T	V	F	A	E	Y	U	X	O	H	O
H	T	O	C	A	S	E	L	P	A	L	M	L	A	R
E	V	R	S	W	A	P	U	P	B	C	G	S	Z	D
R	S	A	Z	U	E	G	T	R	E	E	R	A	L	S
Y	W	T	E	S	T	F	J	W	O	R	J	T	R	Z
X	S	B	C	H	E	G	I	L	W	M	T	R	U	E