

The Living Word

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

23 February 2025

First Reading 1 Sm 26:2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23

The Lord has put you in my power, but I will not raise my hand against you.

Saul set off and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, accompanied by three thousand men chosen from Israel to search for David in the wilderness of Ziph.

So in the dark David and Abishai made their way towards the force, where they found Saul asleep inside the camp, his spear stuck in the ground beside his head, with Abner and the troops lying round him.

Then Abishai said to David, 'Today God has put your enemy in your power; so now let me pin him to the ground with his own spear. Just one stroke! I will not need to strike him twice. David answered Abishai, Do not kill him, for who can lift his hand against the Lord's anointed and be without guilt?' David took the spear and the pitcher of water from beside Saul's head, and they made off. No one saw, no one knew, no one woke up; they were all asleep, for a deep sleep from the Lord had fallen on them.

David crossed to the other side and halted on the top of the mountain a long way off; there was a wide space between them. David then called out, 'Here is the king's spear. Let one of the soldiers come across and take it. The Lord repays everyone for his uprightness and loyalty. Today the Lord put you in my power, but I would not raise my hand against the Lord's anointed.'

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 102:1-4, 8, 10, 12-13, R. v.8

(R.) The Lord is kind and merciful.

1. My soul, give thanks to the Lord, all my being, bless his holy name. My soul, give thanks to the Lord and never forget all his blessings. (R.)
2. It is he who forgives all your guilt, who heals every one of your ills, who redeems your life from the grave, who crowns you with love and compassion. (R.)
3. The Lord is compassion and love, slow to anger and rich in mercy. He does not treat us according to our sins nor repay us according to our faults. (R.)
4. As far as the east is from the west so far does he remove our sins. As a father has compassion on his sons, the Lord has pity on those who fear him. (R.)

Second Reading 1 Cor 15:45-49

Just as we have carried the earthly image, we must carry the heavenly image.

The first man, Adam, as scripture says, became a living soul; but the last Adam has become a life-giving spirit. That is, first the one with the soul, not the spirit, and after that, the one with the spirit. The first man, being from the earth, is earthly by nature; the second man is from heaven. As this earthly man was, so are we on earth; and as the heavenly man is, so are we in heaven. And we, who have been modelled on the earthly man, will be modelled on the heavenly man.

Gospel Acclamation Jn 13:34

Alleluia, alleluia!

I give you a new commandment;

love one another as I have loved you.

Alleluia!

Gospel Lk 6:27-38

Be merciful as your Father is merciful.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'I say this to you who are listening: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who treat you badly. To the man who slaps you on one cheek, present the other cheek too; to the man who takes your cloak from you, do not refuse your tunic. Give to everyone who asks you, and do not ask for your property back from the man who robs you. Treat others as you would like them to treat you. If you love those who love you, what thanks can you expect? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what thanks can you expect? For even sinners do that much. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what thanks can you expect? Even sinners lend to sinners to get back the same amount. Instead, love your enemies and do good, and lend without any hope of return. You will have a great reward, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.'

'Be compassionate as your Father is compassionate. Do not judge, and you will not be judged yourselves; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned yourselves; grant pardon, and you will be pardoned. Give, and there will be gifts for you: a full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap; because the amount you measure out is the amount you will be given back.'

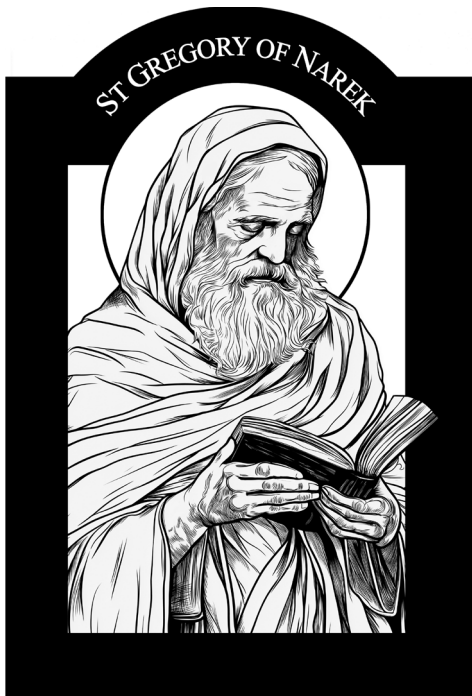


Reflection by Greg Sunter

The radical teaching that was begun in last week's gospel as the beatitudes and woes is continued in this week's challenge to be forgiving, compassionate and generous in the same way that God expresses abundant love. As with the blessings and curses of the Beatitudes passage, this teaching continues the challenge to act against cultural and social expectations. Who would be surprised if you were to express hatred for an enemy or for someone who hates you or treats you badly? But Jesus tells his disciples to **love** their enemies and to **do good** to those who hate them. His instruction is contrary to the 'normal' way of doing things – and that's exactly the message Jesus wanted to convey! Rather than a spiteful, vengeful God who keeps score and punishes wrongdoing, Jesus presents a compelling image of a God of unbounded compassion and abundant generosity.

In this passage we find one version of the Golden Rule that appears repeatedly throughout the gospels (as well as most other religious traditions): 'Treat others as you would like them to treat you.' It is followed up with a comment that it takes no effort to treat well people whom you like – anybody can do that. The challenge is to treat people you don't like as you would like to be treated yourself. In a society that had very strict rules about the way to treat different people and clearly established boundaries between different groups, this was a tough ask by Jesus. Bear in mind also that there was an occupying army in the country and Jesus was encouraging the people to treat even their enemies, the Romans, with love, compassion and forgiveness. This was a radical and challenging teaching!

The psalm responses are from the English Translation of the **Lectio** 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**, ©1983 by The Grail, England and used by permission of the publishers. The scriptural quotations are taken from the **Jerusalem Bible**, published and copyright 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.



St Gregory of Narek was born between 945 and 950 in a village on the southern shores of Lake Van, in modern-day Armenia. After his parents' death he was raised by his scholarly uncle at the Narek monastery. He joined the monastery and was ordained in 977. A professor of theology, Gregory wrote a mystical interpretation of the Song of Songs, and the Book of Prayer (or Book of Lamentations), which he called an encyclopedia of prayer for all nations – it has been translated into thirty languages. Gregory died in the early 11th century and was declared a Doctor of the Church by Pope Francis in 2015. His feast day is celebrated on February 27.

Complete the Text Maze:

“Forgive others and God will forgive you.”

START

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

*CAN YOU FIND THE SIX HIDDEN WORDS FROM THIS WEEKS GOSPEL READING?

FINISH

Crossword

Across

- 1: feeling sorry for someone
- 4: currency, cash
- 5: ____ your enemies
- 7: those who are against you
- 9: not soft
- 10: to assess someone's actions

Down

- 1: speaking highly of another
- 2: the side of your face
- 3: God will _____ our sins
- 5: to let someone borrow
- 6: a gift for good deeds
- 8: clothing worn over the upper body

