



Friday 29th October 2021

Friday of the thirtieth week in Ordinary Time Year 1

Gospel

Lk 14:1-6

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

Which of you here, if his ass or ox falls into a well, will not pull him out on the sabbath day?

Now on a sabbath day Jesus had gone for a meal to the house of one of the leading Pharisees; and they watched him closely. There in front of him was a man with dropsy, and Jesus addressed the lawyers and Pharisees. 'Is it against the law' he asked 'to cure a man on the sabbath, or not?' But they remained silent, so he took the man and cured him and sent him away. Then he said to them, 'Which of you here, if his son falls into a well, or his ox, will not pull him out on a sabbath day without hesitation?' And to this they could find no answer.

Reflection by Fr John Lovell

Is it against the Law to cure a man on the Sabbath, or not'?

What is the Lord saying to us here?

What do *we* have in common with the Pharisees and Scribes? Well, probably a lot more than we think. For instance, we want to be true to the traditions of our forebears. We believe in God and the Commandments. And like those Jewish leaders most of us churchgoers are pretty conservative, meaning we can be a little suspicious to change, unless we see a very compelling justification for it. I suspect the Pharisees and Scribes were not opposed to Jesus healing the sick, but they felt that Him making a habit of doing it on the Sabbath was breaking with tradition and setting a dangerous precedent. 'What next?' they were wondering.

When I was young, back in the 1960s, most shops were closed on Sundays, including pubs. We didn't have great shopping complexes or food courts then and no-one outside of America would have heard of McDonalds, Kentucky Fried Chicken or Pizza Hut. Sunday was a day of rest with only essential

service people going to work, such as: hospital workers, Policemen, bus and taxi drivers, and of course priests and other ministers of religion. It was essentially a family day and most people after attending Church stayed at home, visited relatives (some in hospitals or care homes) or had a picnic in the park. A lot has changed since then and a lot more will continue to change. Not all of it will be good. Let's pray for the discernment to question and resist the negative things – such as legalized assisted suicide – and embrace the positive things, such as Pope Francis encouraging us to take more initiatives to help the sick and the poor. For these are the very people Jesus was trying to help in healing on the Sabbath.

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