



Friday 08 Oct 2021

Friday of the twenty-seventh week in Ordinary Time Year 1

First Reading

JI 1:13-15; 2:1-2

A reading from the prophet Joel

The day of the Lord God is coming, a day of darkness and gloom.

Priests, put on sackcloth and lament.
Ministers of the altar, wail.
Come, pass the night in sackcloth,
you ministers of my God.
For the house of our God has been deprived
of oblation and libation.
Order a fast,
proclaim a solemn assembly;
elders, call together
all the inhabitants of the country
to the house of the Lord your God.
Cry out to the Lord,
'Oh, what a day!
For the day of the Lord is near,
it comes as a devastation from Shaddai.'
Sound the trumpet in Zion,
give the alarm on my holy mountain!
Let all the inhabitants of the country tremble,
for the day of the Lord is coming,
yes, it is near.
Day of darkness and gloom,
day of cloud and blackness.
Like the dawn there spreads across the mountains
a vast and mighty host,
such as has never been before,
such as will never be again
to the remotest ages.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 9:2-3. 6. 16. 8-9. R. v.9

(R.) The Lord will judge the world with justice.

1. I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart;
I will recount all your wonders.
I will rejoice in you and be glad,
and sing psalms to your name O Most High. **(R.)**

- 2 You have checked the nations, destroyed the wicked;
you have wiped out their name for ever and ever.
The nations have fallen in the pit which they made,
their feet caught in the snare they laid. (R.)
3. But the Lord sits enthroned for ever.
He has set up his throne for judgement;
he will judge the world with justice,
he will judge the peoples with his truth. (R.)

Gospel

Lk 11:15-26

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

If by the finger of God I cast out devils, the kingdom of God has overtaken you.

When Jesus had cast out a devil, some of the people said, 'It is through Beelzebul, the prince of devils, that he casts out devils.' Others asked Jesus, as a test, for a sign from heaven; but, knowing what they were thinking, he said to them, 'Every kingdom divided against itself is heading for ruin, and a household divided against itself collapses. So too with Satan: if he is divided against himself, how can his kingdom stand? – since you assert that it is through Beelzebul that I cast out devils. Now if it is through Beelzebul that I cast out devils, through whom do your own experts cast them out? Let them be your judges, then. But if it is through the finger of God that I cast out devils, then know that the kingdom of God has overtaken you. So long as a strong man fully armed guards his own palace, his goods are undisturbed; but when someone stronger than he is attacks and defeats him, the stronger man takes away all the weapons he relied on and shares out his spoil.

'He who is not with me is against me; and he who does not gather with me scatters.

'When an unclean spirit goes out of a man it wanders through waterless country looking for a place to rest, and not finding one it says, "I will go back to the home I came from." But on arrival, finding it swept and tidied, it then goes off and brings seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and set up house there, so that the man ends up by being worse than he was before.

Reflection By Fr John Lovell

We all have a responsibility as decent citizens of society and as Christians to do what we can to separate fact from fiction. And where a reasonable uncertainty exists, to give people the benefit of the doubt.

Beyond the current pandemic of COVID-19, there is another pandemic – a pandemic of misinformation, rumour, suspicion and insinuation – that each year results in the destruction of countless careers, relationships and lives. We see it in politics, sports, the film and music industry and in so many other areas of life, particularly where the media is involved. Divisiveness and controversy make for big headlines, but not for a society that longs for a future built on true justice, prosperity and love.

In our Gospel reading today, Jesus has been falsely accused of casting out evil through Beelzebul, the prince of devils. We don't learn the name or names of those individuals who originated this accusation, which is also often the case when scandal is circulated about someone today. And this is exactly how the Devil, the spirit of evil, works. He hides in the shadows and sets out to spread hatred and intolerance throughout the world. Jesus' response to this accusation against Him is not to hunt down the individuals who started it, but appeals to those around Him to think about what they saying and understand that it simply makes no sense.

As Christians in our world today we can't afford to get caught up in spreading misinformation, gossip or scandal about anyone. If we become aware that some criminal act has occurred, we need to report it to the appropriate legislative authority so they can investigate. Trial by media and popular opinion based on unsubstantiated hearsay can never be trusted and is always destructive. We are here to build-up the Kingdom of God, not to tear it down. So let's do our part in breaking the cycle of this pandemic of misinformation in our world, by guiding, encourage and supporting all people, particularly those in positions of public life. We can do this with our prayers and thanksgiving for the many good things they do. And if we believe they are on the wrong path, we can let them know in an honest, peaceful and constructive way.

© 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.

The English translation of the Psalm Responses, the Alleluia and Gospel Verses, and the Lenten Gospel Acclamations, and the Titles, Summaries, and Conclusion of the Readings, from the Lectionary for Mass © 1997, 1981, 1968, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. All rights reserved.

The prayers are from the English Translation of the Roman Missal © 2010 International Committee on English in the Liturgy Inc. (ICEL). All rights reserved.