



Wednesday 06 Oct 2021

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

First Reading

Jon 4:1-11

A reading from the prophet Jonah

Jonah, you worry over a plant. Am I not to feel sorry for the great city Nineveh?

Jonah was very indignant; he fell into a rage. He prayed to the Lord and said, 'Ah! Lord, is not this just as I said would happen when I was still at home? That was why I went and fled to Tarshish: I knew that you were a God of tenderness and compassion, slow to anger, rich in graciousness, relenting from evil. So now Lord, please take away my life, for I might as well be dead as go on living.' The Lord replied, 'Are you right to be angry?' Jonah then went out of the city and sat down to the east of the city. There he made himself a shelter and sat under it in the shade, to see what would happen to the city. Then the Lord God arranged that a castor-oil plant should grow up over Jonah to give shade for his head and soothe his ill-humour; Jonah was delighted with the castor-oil plant. But at dawn the next day, God arranged that a worm should attack the castor-oil plant – and it withered. Next, when the sun rose, God arranged that there should be a scorching east wind; the sun beat down so hard on Jonah's head that he was overcome and begged for death, saying 'I might as well be dead as go on living.' 'God said to Jonah, 'Are you right to be angry about the castor-oil plant?' He replied, 'I have every right to be angry, to the point of death.' The Lord replied, 'You are only upset about a castor-oil plant which cost you no labour, which you did not make grow, which sprouted in a night and has perished in a night. And am I not to feel sorry for Nineveh, the great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left, to say nothing of all the animals?'

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 85:3-6. 9-10. R. v.15

(R.) Lord, you are tender and full of love.

1. You are my God, have mercy on me, Lord,
for I cry to you all the day long.
Give joy to your servant, O Lord,
for to you I lift up my soul. (R.)
2. O Lord, you are good and forgiving,
full of love to all who call.
Give heed, O Lord, to my prayer
and attend to the sound of my voice. (R.)
3. All the nations shall come to adore you
and glorify your name, O Lord:
for you are great and do marvellous deeds,
you who alone are God. (R.)

Gospel

Lk 11:1-4

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

Lord, teach us to pray.

Once Jesus was in a certain place praying, and when he had finished, one of his disciples said, 'Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.' He said to them, 'Say this when you pray:

"Father, may your name be held holy,
your kingdom come,
give us each day our daily bread,
and forgive us our sins,
for we ourselves forgive each one who is in debt to us.
And do not put us to the test."

Reflection By Fr John Lovell

Our First Reading today finds the prophet Jonah becoming very indignant and going into a rage. Does that remind you of anyone? Perhaps it reminds us of ourselves at times? Perhaps we lost it one day when we got caught up in the traffic, or were faced with a long line to the checkouts in the supermarket. Or perhaps the waiter in the local grill thought we wanted our steak well-done when we asked for it rare, or we received a penalty notice from the ATO because we forgot to put our Tax Return in on time.

The apparent injustices of life can drive us mad. We allow so many relatively minor things to get under our skin when we are really incredibly blessed compared with so many others in our world. I think of Martha in yesterday's Gospel complaining about her sister Mary for apparently shirking her domestic duties.

Like Jonah, we can sometimes turn this anger on God for allowing these 'injustices' to take place. *Why isn't God holding these people to account when they goof-up and make them pay for their crimes?* The answer is: for the same reason God is not striking *us* down for getting angry with our neighbour.

Let's learn the lesson of Jonah and acknowledge that the Lord is a 'God of tenderness and compassion, slow to anger, rich in graciousness', and become more that way ourselves. Doing this will put us on the path to everlasting peace.

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