

Your Lourdes Sunday Liturgy at Home

13th Sunday in Ordinary Time

June 28, 2020

“A Cup of Cold Water”

Our Scriptures this weekend focus on simple gifts that lead to “newness of life” in both giver and receiver. Hospitality is a central pillar of our Christian identity. The more you practice it, the more it transforms you. Hospitality changes both the recipient and the provider. Look at what a commitment to hospitality has done to our beloved community at Our Lady of Lourdes.

We are invited to practice – Philoxenia – which is Greek for “being friend to the stranger” and the opposite to Xenophobia, or aversion of people from other countries. As the Letter to the Hebrews says, “Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly have entertained angels.” (13:1-2)

We begin this week from a story about Elisha, the successor of the first Hebrew prophet, Elijah. Their lives are intertwined and are worth a bit of summer Bible study. The saga of the Proto-prophet Elijah the Tishbite spans 1 Kings 17 to 2 Kings 3-9. He is last mentioned in the Hebrew Bible in 2 Chronicles 21:2. The story of Elisha spans 1 Kings 19 – 2 Kings 14

- Elisha is first mentioned in 1 Kings 19 when Elijah learns that God has anointed Elisha son of Shaphat to be his successor . Then Elijah sets off to find him. And thus their linked stories begin.
- He’s soon found and against Elijah’s wishes, Elisha joins the venerable prophet in his final sojourn.
- Elijah imitating Moses rolls up his cloak and strikes the waters of the Jordan River, which divides and allows him to cross over.
- Then Elijah is taken to heaven in a fiery whirlwind (and/or chariot), dropping his cloak onto Elisha his successor, giving him a double portion of his spirit.

- This dramatic exit has sparked traditions to spring up around Elijah. Expectations were that he would return to earth to die and bring the long expected messiah with him. Luke tells us that's why John the Baptist seemed to some to be Elijah, which John denies. Then some thought Jesus was Elijah.
- And when Jesus cried out “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” from the cross, the bystanders thought he was crying out for Elijah (Matthew 27:47).
- At the traditional Passover celebration a place is set for Elijah, a cup of wine poured, the front door ajar, and a prayer is sung inviting Elijah to come and bring the messiah.
- Not to be outdone, some homes have an Elisha room– for the wise person or artist to tarry in and consider a home away from home as they pass through town (based on this Sunday's reading, specifically 2 Kings 4:10).

Some of the stories of Elijah and Elisha parallel accounts of Jesus' ministry, especially in Luke's Gospel.

- Raising the widow's son from the dead
 - 2 Kings 4:8-37
 - Luke 7:11-16
- Multiplying the loaves
 - 1 Kings 4:42-44
 - Luke 9:10-17 also Matthew 15:33-38; Mark 8:1-9; John 6:1-13
- Curing lepers
 - 1 Kings 5:1-14
 - Luke 5:12-16; also Luke 17:11-19

In fact Jesus compares himself to Elijah and Elisha in his first sermon with regard to helping foreigners, Luke 4:25-27.

In Middle Eastern culture in the ancient world, hospitality was a necessity. The vulnerable stranger was accorded protection, food, water, shelter and rest. Jewish people were enjoined to care for

widows, orphans and the strangers who lived among them. They were reminded that they once were aliens in Egypt.

Travel also was perilous for African American people in the Jim Crow era, which led postman Victor Hugo Green to publish an annual directory of places to dine, service autos, and stay overnight. The “Green Book” was a lifeline of hospitality through hostile territory.

“A distinctively Christian understanding of hospitality developed in the early centuries of the church,” writes Christine D. Pohl in Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition. “Christian commitments pressed hospitality outward toward the weakest, those least likely to be able to reciprocate.” This is in line with Jesus’ command in Luke 14:13-14: “When you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed because they cannot repay you.”

In the 20th century and into our day, communities of hospitality have formed. Some are in Georgia. Here are a few:

- The Catholic Worker (175 locations) [the Atlanta community called The Open Door which closed recently was part of this movement inspired by Dorothy Day];
- L’Arche, house-based community that celebrates the gifts of people with and without intellectual abilities: Our local L’Arche is at 500 S. Columbia Dr., Decatur GA 30030;
- Jubilee Partners (an outgrowth Koinonia Farm where Cotton Patch Gospels were written) – an intentional Christian service community in rural northeast Georgia offering hospitality to refugees and immigrants who have newly arrived in the U.S. P.O. Box 68, Comer, GA
- Madonna House – Ontario, Canada

The boundaries of Christian hospitality keep expanding, like the ever-widening inclusive circle called the Beloved Community. Theologian Jennie Weiss Block speaks of “copious hosting” in her study of disabled people seeking community, and notes poignantly that

“exclusion is a way of life” for them as they experience prejudice, communication blocks and architectural barriers.

And Jesus keeps calling us to simple human connection with the vulnerable. In today’s Gospel, he concludes: “whoever gives only a cup of cold water to one of these little ones to drink because the little one” is a disciple, amen, I say to you, they will most certainly not lose their reward. (Matthew 10:42)

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Opening Hymn

I Want to be a Follower of Christ
by J.W. Harris

1. I want to be a follower of Christ,
I want to be one of his disciples.
I want to live in the newness of life,
Just let me be a follower of Christ.

2. I want to be a fisher, now for Christ.
I want to bring other souls to him,
I want to help rid this world of its strife,
Just let me be a follower of Christ.

What do I have to do?
What do I have to say?
How do I have to walk each and ev'ry day?
Tell me what does it cost if I carry the cross?
Just let me be a follower of Christ.

Leader: In the name of the Father, † and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Assembly: *Amen*

Leader: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and
the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: And with your spirit.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Lord Jesus, you called the apostles to take up your cross:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you promised rewards to those who lived as you lived:

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you offer us the same invitation:

Lord, have mercy.

Opening Prayer

All-powerful God, your incarnate Word commands our obedience and offers us true life.

Make our ears be attentive to the voice of your Son and our hearts be generous in answering his call that we may take up the cross with trust in his promises.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Let the Church say.....AMEN!

Let the church say – Amen.

1st Reading – 2 Kings 4:8-11, 14-16A

⁸ One day Elisha came to Shunem, where there was a woman of influence, who urged him to dine with her. Afterward, whenever he passed by, he used to stop there to dine.

⁹ So she said to her husband, “I know that Elisha is a holy man of God. Since he visits us often,

¹⁰ let us arrange a little room on the roof and furnish it for him with a bed, table, chair, and lamp, so that when he comes to us he can stay there.”

¹¹ Sometime later Elisha arrived and stayed in the room overnight.

¹⁴ Later Elisha asked, “Can something be done for her?” His servant Gehazi answered, “Yes! She has no son, and her husband is getting on in years.”

¹⁵ Elisha said, “Call her.” When the woman had been called and stood at the door,

¹⁶ Elisha promised, “This time next year you will be fondling a baby son.”
The Word of the Lord.....Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm – Psalms 89:2-3, 16-17, 18-19

R. (2a) For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

² The promises of the LORD I will sing forever,
through all generations my mouth shall proclaim your faithfulness.

³ For you have said, “My kindness is established forever;”
in heaven you have confirmed your faithfulness.

R. Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

¹⁶ Blessed the people who know the joyful shout;
in the light of your countenance, O LORD, they walk.

⁷ At your name they rejoice all the day,
and through your justice they are exalted.

R. Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

¹⁸ You are the splendor of their strength,
and by your favor our horn is exalted.

¹⁹ For to the LORD belongs our shield,
and the Holy One of Israel, our king.

R. For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

2nd Reading – Romans 6:3-4, 8-11

³ Brothers and sisters: Are you unaware that we who were baptized
into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

⁴ We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so
that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the
Father, we too might live in newness of life.

⁸ If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live
with him.

⁹ We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no
longer has power over him.

¹⁰ As to his death, he died to sin once and for all; as to his life, he lives
for God.

¹¹ Consequently, you too must think of yourselves as dead to sin and
living for God in Christ Jesus.

The Word of the Lord.....Thanks be to God.

Alleluia – 1 Peter 2:9

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

⁹ You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation;
announce the praises of him who called you out of darkness
into his wonderful light.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel – Matthew 10:37-42

³⁷ Jesus said to his apostles: “Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me;

³⁸ and whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me.

³⁹ Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

⁴⁰ “Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me.

⁴¹ Whoever receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and whoever receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man’s reward.

⁴² And whoever gives only a cup of cold water to one of these little ones to drink because the little one is a disciple amen, I say to you, he will surely not lose his reward.”

The Gospel of the Lord.....Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection Prompts

Rouse your souls with this rendition of "**He Got Up**" by **Edwin Hawkins Music & Arts Seminar Mass Choir (1983)**.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iEgCUOdil4g>

In his book *Innocents Abroad*, Mark Twain stated: “Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts. Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men [and women] and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one little corner of the earth all one’s lifetime.”

- How has your encounter with others in your travels expanded you?

- How might the biblical concept of hospitality have an impact on today's debates about refugees and immigration policy?

Today's Gospel message is that those who become schooled in losing their life in love for others actually find a life so fulfilling that any other way seems a waste.

- How have you lost yourself in serving others?
- What "other directed" ministry draws you most?
- How can you reach out in a time of social distance?

When the discussion or meditation winds down, listen to **"I'm Buildin' Me a Home" – Morehouse Glee Club**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ytZokglpaQw>

Then, after a moment of contemplative ease, move into the intercessions, followed by singing or reciting the Lord's Prayer.

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS – June 28, 2020
 THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Presider: Loving God, give us the ability to experience the "newness of life" in Christ and endow us with greater awareness of the needs of others, as we bring our prayers to you.

Worship Leader

1. For the church, that peacemakers rise up from our pews to serve the world. We pray: **Heal our land, O God.**
 (RESPOND: **Heal our land, O God.**)
2. For all graduates that they receive extra portions of creativity and perseverance as they open the next chapters in their story. We pray: **Heal our land, O God.**
3. For America as it observes Independence Day — that its ideals of equality for all to have life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness be fully realized. We pray: **Heal our land, O God.**

4. For organizations and individuals who live out the Gospel by serving the needs of others, especially those who are at great risk during this pandemic. We pray: **Heal our land, O God.**
5. For displaced persons, refugees, and all those who are driven from their home countries, that they be welcomed and included. We pray: **Heal our land, O God.**
6. For those whose work or personal commitments require extraordinary courage; for all who take risks for others, especially in this time of pandemic. We pray: **Heal our land, O God.**
7. For healing and inspiration for Kenneth W. Louis, our beloved director of liturgy & music. We pray: **Heal our land, O God.**
8. For faith expanding experiences to flow from our hospitality, especially to strangers and people on the margins of society. We pray: **Heal our land, O God.**
9. For an end to the Death Penalty and Human Trafficking, especially in Georgia. We pray: **Heal our land, O God.**
10. For all those who are separated from us by infirmity, especially those listed in our bulletin, and for all those living with HIV and AIDS, that they know our community's care for them. We pray: **Heal our land, O God.**
11. For all the dead, that they see God face to face, especially Rita Engelhardt and Wallace Rooney for whom this Mass is being celebrated. We pray: **Heal our land, O God.**
12. Please share any intention you have [PAUSE.....] as well as all our own needs. We pray: **Heal our land, O God.**

Presider: God who calls and accompanies us, we want to be followers of Christ. Grant us courage when we are afraid, confidence when we are doubtful, strength when we are weary, and wisdom when we are confused. We ask this in Jesus' name. LET THE CHURCH SAY – AMEN!

Lord's Prayer

Blessing of 2020 Graduates

Let us unite our hearts in prayer for all those who were graduated this year. Graduates, as you celebrate your achievements and prepare to begin new endeavors in these precarious times, be mindful of your grounding in faith, and of your vocation to serve God in all your life's work and accomplishments.

May God who began this good work in you, carry it through to completion, enabling you to use your talents to the fullest.

May God give you the grace to make wise choices and to be faithful to your commitments, always confident in the support of those who love you.

May God bless you with discomfort at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships.

May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that you will work for justice, equality, and peace.

May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation, and war, so that you will reach out your hand to comfort them and change their pain into joy.

May God bless you with the foolishness to think that you can make a difference in the world, so that you will do the things which others tell you cannot be done.

May your integrity be a gift to the world, and may the Spirit of God be with you always. Let the church say, Amen.

Closing Prayer

Give us new life, Lord God, through the divine gift we have offered and received, so that, bound to you in unending love,

we may bring forth fruit that remains.

LET THE CHURCH SAY: AMEN

Lift Every Voice and Sing

by James Weldon Johnson, lyrics (1900)
& J. Rosamond Johnson, music (1905)

Lift every voice and sing,
Till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the listening skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us,
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,
Bitter the chastening rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat,
Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the
slaughtered,
Out from the gloomy past,
Till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way,
Thou who has by Thy might
Led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray,
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee,
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
May we forever stand
True to our God,

True to our native land.