

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Mt 8: 17

Alleluia, alleluia! / He bore our sickness, / and endured our suffering. Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Mk 1: 29-39

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

He cured many who suffered from diseases of one kind or another.

On leaving the synagogue, Jesus went with James and John straight to the house of Simon and Andrew. Now Simon's mother-in-law had gone to bed with fever, and they told him about her straightaway. He went to her, took her by the hand and helped her up. And the fever left her and she began to wait on them.

That evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were sick and those who were possessed by devils. The whole town came crowding round the door, and he cured many who were suffering from diseases of one kind or another; he also cast out many devils, but he would not allow them to speak, because they knew who he was.

In the morning, long before dawn, he got up and left the house, and went off to a lonely place and prayed there. Simon and his companions set out in search of him, and when they found him they said, 'Everybody is looking for you.' He answered, 'Let us go elsewhere, to the neighbouring country towns, so that I can preach there too, because that is why I came.' And he went all through Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out devils.'

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

A SERVICE OF THE SOCIETY OF ST PAUL

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Breaking Open the Word

CONCERN FOR OTHERS

In the midst of his suffering Job takes stock of his life and judges that it can be best described as drudgery and futile. His words are a powerful reminder to us that ours is not the first or last generation to search for meaning in the midst of the complexity of the human situation. It is into the darkness, pain and questioning of ours that Jesus enters with a message of hope. His mission and message is one of healing, freedom and new beginnings.

Paul writes to the Corinthians about the mission that he has received from the Lord, that of preaching the gospel message. He is dealing with a situation where some of the people are exercising their freedom in Christ by eating meat which had previously been sacrificed to idols. While Paul agreed with them that idols did not exist, and that the meat was only meat, their mistake was in not being concerned about their 'weaker' brethren who were scandalised by their behaviour. Rather than arguing who is right and who is wrong, Paul argues that not causing suffering to the other person is a higher value. Using his own practice as an example he talks about how he has tried to become all things to all people so that he might not be an obstacle to the gospel message being preached. Since he exercises his freedom by concern for the other, he hopes that the 'stronger' members of the community will do the same.

Christopher Monaghan CP



THE SAVING WORD

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME / B

07 FEBRUARY 2021

FIRST READING

Job 7: 1-4, 6-7

A reading from the book of Job

I am filled with sorrow all day long.

Job began to speak:

Is not man's life on earth nothing more than pressed service,
his time no better than hired drudgery?
Like the slave, sighing for the shade,
or the workman with no thought but his wages,
months of delusion I have assigned to me,
nothing for my own but nights of grief.
Lying in bed I wonder, 'When will it be day?'
Risen I think, 'How slowly evening comes!'
Restlessly I fret till twilight falls.
Swifter than a weaver's shuttle my days
have passed,
and vanished, leaving no hope behind.
Remember that my life is but a breath,
and that my eyes will never again see joy.

■ The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 146: 1-6. R. v. 3

R. Praise the Lord who heals the broken-hearted. *or Alleluia!*

1. Praise the Lord for he is good; / sing to our God for he is loving; / to him our praise is due. **R.**
2. The Lord builds up Jerusalem / and brings back Israel's exiles, / he heals the broken-hearted, / he binds up all their wounds. / He fixes the number of the stars; / he calls each one by its name. **R.**
3. Our Lord is great and almighty; / his wisdom can never be measured. / The Lord raises the lowly; / he humbles the wicked to the dust. **R.**



SECOND READING

1 Cor 9: 16-19, 22-23

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

Punishment will come to me if I do not preach the Gospel.

I do not boast of preaching the gospel, since it is a duty which has been laid on me; I should be punished if I did not preach it! If I had chosen this work myself, I might have been paid for it, but as I have not, it is a responsibility which has been put into my hands. Do you know what my reward is? It is this: in my preaching, to be able to offer the Good News free, and not insist on the rights which the gospel gives me.

So though I am not a slave of any man I have made myself the slave of everyone so as to win as many as I could. For the weak I made myself weak. I made myself all things to all men in order to save some at any cost; and I still do this, for the sake of the gospel, to have a share in its blessing.

■ The word of the Lord.