

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time (John Carroll University 9 PM Student Mass)

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The Readings follow below Fr. Bretzke's Homily Notes

I have to admit the first line in the First Reading from Jeremiah troubles me:

*You duped me, O LORD, and I let myself be duped;
you were too strong for me, and you triumphed.*

Coupled with Jesus' rebuke of Peter for the latter's misguided "support" of Jesus, these verses certainly seem to go against so much of the messaging of our contemporary culture which tells us to put ourselves First, to rule with Power and to despise, or deport the weak as "losers"...

This might be the sort of thing that Jesus admonished Peter for "thinking not as God does, but as human beings do."

For a contemporary version we could consider one of the memes that appeared this weekend under the biblical quote of Jesus in Matthew's Gospel of "With God all things are possible"



If this ISN'T of God, we still need to consider more deeply then what, and how, does God "think"?

This semester I'm teaching two courses that in one way or another might help wrestle with these questions: Catholic Moral Theology and Asian Religions & Human Rights. So I suppose that's my context for reflecting on the readings for our first Sunday Mass of the new semester.

Probably most of you might think that “Moral Theology” is largely about figuring out what is “right” and “wrong” in God’s eyes, and to an extent that is “correct,” but I think the course goes deeper than that.

Asian Religions might be a bit harder to connect to this same theme of ethical rightness, but I think here too there can be a connection.

Koan

A puzzle that is aimed at breaking down our “usual” ways of thinking so we can come to some new and deeper insight.

The classic beginning Koan is “listen to the sound of one hand clapping.”

I asked AI to solve this paradox for me, and this is what I got:

“The Zen koan “listen to the sound of one hand clapping” is a paradox meant to exhaust your analytical mind and point you toward a direct, intuitive experience of reality beyond words and logic.”

I think what Jesus is telling Peter and the rest of the Disciples also is a Koan, that a genuine “pastor” and “protector” under the Banner of the Cross is going to have to suffer greatly, offer up his life---and then, only then, will death itself be swallowed by victory.

Thus, I would suggest that Jesus Christ is the ultimate Koan of God that if we can “pass it” will bring us to what Japanese calls *Satori*--usually translated as truly deep, ultimate “Enlightenment”

Our time together this evening, as well as *all* of our activities and courses hopefully will each in their own way help us uncover the deeper meanings of our life in some sort of transcendent manner---i.e. something that takes us out of and beyond ourselves.

I think that probably resonates with the deeper purposes of most of the learning opportunities here at John Carroll.

Or as we are soon to pray in the Our Father:

May your Kingdom come, and Your will be done
On Earth, as it is in heaven...

To which we all are asked to say “Amen”!

The Readings for the 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time (JCU Student Mass)

Lectionary: 124

Reading 1 [Jeremiah 20:7-9](#)

You duped me, O LORD, and I let myself be duped;
you were too strong for me, and you triumphed.
All the day I am an object of laughter;

everyone mocks me.

Whenever I speak, I must cry out,
violence and outrage is my message;
the word of the LORD has brought me
derision and reproach all the day.

I say to myself, I will not mention him,
I will speak in his name no more.
But then it becomes like fire burning in my heart,
imprisoned in my bones;
I grow weary holding it in, I cannot endure it.

Responsorial Psalm Psalm 63:2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9

R. (2b) My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

O God, you are my God whom I seek;
for you my flesh pines and my soul thirsts
like the earth, parched, lifeless and without water.

R. My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

Thus have I gazed toward you in the sanctuary
to see your power and your glory,
for your kindness is a greater good than life;
my lips shall glorify you.

R. My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

Thus will I bless you while I live;
lifting up my hands, I will call upon your name.
As with the riches of a banquet shall my soul be satisfied,
and with exultant lips my mouth shall praise you.

R. My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

You are my help,
and in the shadow of your wings I shout for joy.
My soul clings fast to you;
your right hand upholds me.

R. My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

Reading 2 Romans 12:1-2

I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God,
to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice,
holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship.
Do not conform yourselves to this age
but be transformed by the renewal of your mind,
that you may discern what is the will of God,
what is good and pleasing and perfect.

Alleluia cf. Ephesians 1:17-18

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
enlighten the eyes of our hearts,
that we may know what is the hope
that belongs to our call.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel Matthew 16:21-27

Jesus began to show his disciples
that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer greatly
from the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes,
and be killed and on the third day be raised.
Then Peter took Jesus aside and began to rebuke him,
"God forbid, Lord! No such thing shall ever happen to you."
He turned and said to Peter,
"Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle to me.
You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do."

Then Jesus said to his disciples,
"Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself,
take up his cross, and follow me.
For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it,
but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.
What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world
and forfeit his life?
Or what can one give in exchange for his life?
For the Son of Man will come with his angels in his Father's glory,
and then he will repay all according to his conduct."