



**Archdiocese of St. Louis
Office of Sacred Worship
Lectio Divina**

Tuesday of the Third Week in Ordinary Time Year I

Lectionary: 318: Heb 10:1-10/Ps 40:2 and 4ab, 7-8a, 10, 11/See Mt 11:25/Mk 3:31-35

Read the following passage four times.

- The first reading, simply read the scripture and pause for a minute. Listen to the passage with the ear of the heart. Don't get distracted by intellectual types of questions about the passage. Just listen to what the passage is saying to you, right now.
- The second reading, look for a key word or phrase that draws your attention. Notice if any phrase, sentence or word stands out and gently begin to repeat it to yourself, allowing it to touch you deeply. No elaboration. In a group setting, you can share that word/phrase or simply pass.
- The third reading, pause for 2-3 minutes reflecting on "*Where does the content of this reading touch my life today?*" Notice what thoughts, feelings, and reflections arise within you. Let the words resound in your heart. What might God be asking of you through the scripture? In a group setting, you can share your reflection or simply pass.
- The fourth reading, pause for 2-3 minutes reflecting on "*I believe that God wants me to today/this week.*" Notice any prayerful response that arises within you, for example a small prayer of gratitude or praise. In a group setting, you can share your reflection or simply pass.

Reading

Heb 10:1-10

Brothers and sisters: Since the law has only a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of them, it can never make perfect those who come to worship by the same sacrifices that they offer continually each year. Otherwise, would not the sacrifices have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, once cleansed, would no longer have had any consciousness of sins? But in those sacrifices there is only a yearly remembrance of sins, for it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats take away sins. For this reason, when he came into the world, he said:

Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you took no delight. Then I said, as is written of me in the scroll, Behold, I come to do your will, O God.

First he says, Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings, you neither desired nor delighted in. These are offered according to the law. Then he says, Behold, I come to do your will. He takes away the first to establish the second. By this "will," we have been consecrated through the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all.



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Responsorial Psalm

Ps 40:2 and 4ab, 7-8a, 10, 11

R. (8a and 9a) Here am I Lord; I come to do your will.

I have waited, waited for the LORD, and he stooped toward me. And he put a new song into my mouth, a hymn to our God.

R. Here am I Lord; I come to do your will.

Sacrifice or oblation you wished not, but ears open to obedience you gave me. Burnt offerings or sin-offerings you sought not; then said I, "Behold I come."

R. Here am I Lord; I come to do your will.

I announced your justice in the vast assembly; I did not restrain my lips, as you, O LORD, know.

R. Here am I Lord; I come to do your will.

Your justice I kept not hid within my heart; your faithfulness and your salvation I have spoken of; I have made no secret of your kindness and your truth in the vast assembly.

R. Here am I Lord; I come to do your will.



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Alleluia

See Mt 11:25

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth; you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the Kingdom.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

Mk 3:31-35

The mother of Jesus and his brothers arrived at the house. Standing outside, they sent word to Jesus and called him. A crowd seated around him told him, "Your mother and your brothers and your sisters are outside asking for you." But he said to them in reply, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking around at those seated in the circle he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."



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LECTIONARY

1) Heb 10:1-10

The sacrifices and temple ceremonies turn out to be a shadow of the good things to come, when Jesus offered himself, once, for all time and for all people, perfectly accomplishing God's will and sanctifying us in the new covenant.

2) 2 Sam 6:12-15, 17-19

David dances before the ark during the festival procession bringing it into Jerusalem. Through David's generosity the celebration ends with a sacred banquet.

3) Mark 3:31-35

Turning to the crowd, Jesus declared: these are my mother and my brothers and sisters-whoever does the will of god.

Carroll StuhlmueLLer, C.P. Biblical Mediations for Ordinary Time

Fidelity to God's will, in the declaration of today's gospel, forms a family of all followers of Jesus. Jesus identified the true disciple, not by special privileges acquired at birth, nor by rank or position, certainly not talents, gift and financial resources-only by conscientious fidelity in the day to day routine of life. Jesus is asking us to undertake each action though it were done in the context of a family. The other party is my sister or brother, my mother or father.

In order to know God's will, therefore, Jesus did not turn to the giants of apostolic activity, the twelve apostles, nor to his immediate earthly family, not even to Mary his mother. Jesus is declaring that God's will is not to be identified with great achievements but with faithfulness in the daily routine of life, with sympathy and understanding as shown in a family, with such virtues s patience and forgiveness which keep a family together.

At first reading it may seem that Jesus is breaking a family tie rather than forming one. When Jesus' mother Mary and other members of his family and relations come to him, one would think that Jesus would drop everything else and run to meet them. This eagerness to join one's parent, by contrast with Jesus's distancing of himself from Mary, is very evident in the action of the patriarch Joseph in Egypt. When word was brought to Joseph that his father Jacob had arrived "in the region of Goshen" and was already approaching the royal palace, we are told that:

Joseph hitched the horses to his chariot and rode to meet his father. . . . As soon as he saw him, he flung himself on his neck and wept a long time in his arms. And [Jacob] said to Joseph, "At last I can die, now that I have seen for myself that Joseph is still alive" (Gen 46:29-30).

The contrast between the action of Joseph and that of Jesus startles us. Yet we also recall the way by which Joseph too distanced himself from his brothers when they first came to Egypt for grain. Evidently, there are moments when we reach inward to our intimate family circle; the one by birth and upbringing; other moments when we turn outward not to form our own family or community but to share family love with outsiders.

Jesus shows us examples of both moments: in today's gospel he is conscious of his world family; later from the cross he uses up what little strength is left in his dying moments to provide for his Mother Mary (John 19:25-27). Yet even this last tender moment between Jesus and Mary becomes a lesson or type of Jesus' relation



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with the entire church. Here as elsewhere in the gospels, Mary is often representative of the church, the center of a praying community (Acts 1:12-14).

The will of God is directing us in each moment as we reach inward or reach outward. How difficult it is to distinguish which moment is at hand in our long series of relationship with family and outsiders! The true and godly decision is reached through a combination of courage and tenderness, a blend that is seen in each action of Jesus.

The first readings are enlightened by our reflections on the gospel. If God's will is normally found and fulfilled in the small events of family life and in our sharing of family love and tenderness with outsiders, then we can see in the selection from the Letter to the Hebrews that God is not disparaging the daily sacrifices of the old covenant. This is no put-down! Yet we are asked to sustain our daily, small actions by the strength and goodness of Jesus. Repeatedly we need to turn to Jesus, to purify our motives, to see our goals our actions and to form an ever greater circle of love. This one offering of Jesus sanctifies all of our daily actions. The essence of his sacrifice is the gift of his will:

Sacrifices and offering you did not desire, but a body you have prepared for me;
Then I said, as is written of me in the book, I have come to do your will, O God."

God's will can be reached carefully and tenderly; it can also break upon us suddenly by surprise. At times it summons us to rejoicing and celebration.

David, girt with a linen apron [as a sacred minister] came dancing before the Lord with abandon, as he and all the Israelites were bringing up the ark of the Lord with shouts of joy and to the sound of horn.

The spontaneity of children can teach grown-ups that such is the Kingdom of God. Children too can huddle up with warm embrace in the close family circle; they can also run through the neighborhood and wave at total strangers. They are teaching us the meaning of Jesus' words as he gazed at the wide circle of people from all parts of the land:

These are my mother and my brothers. Whoever does the will of God is brother and sister and mother to me.

Prayer:

Whatever be the moment, Lord God, be it a serious decision that seems to tear apart my family attachment and desires, or a spontaneous shout of joy and round of dancing, let it always be that "here I am, Lord, I come to do your will." I will always react with a blend of courage and tenderness. Then the doors of my heart will be opened to receive the King of glory.

***** 2012 *****

Focus: We are to honor our relationship with God by trying to be more like Jesus.

As our relationship with God deepens, we grow in wisdom, faith and love. This helps us to lead more Christ-like lives of love and service. Saint Francis de Sales, whom the Church honors today, did just this as he helped others know and follow Jesus. Let us ask him to help us deepen our relationship with God.



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LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, David brings the Ark to Jerusalem. He honors it, for on those who receive this Ark reverently, blessings are bestowed. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches that those who follow Him and seek to do God's will are united as one in Him. Through faith and Baptism, we are brothers and sisters in the Lord.

***** 2013 *****

Focus: It is important to do the will of the Father.

Our readings today are complementary. We hear in the Letter to the Hebrews that *we have been consecrated through the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all*. What is our response? Jesus gives the answer in the Gospel today when he proclaims the importance of doing the will of the Father.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading contrasts the law and Old Testament sacrifices with the new, perfect sacrifice of Christ. It shows how Jesus came to do the will of the Father. The Gospel also takes up the theme of doing the will of the Father when Jesus tells the crowd that *whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother*.

***** 2014 *****

Focus: We open our life to true fruitfulness and peace when we choose to live God's will.

Saint Thomas Aquinas served God as an *outstanding theologian* whose knowledge was inspired through deep prayer. He considered the *fruits* of his knowledge gifts of God that should be shared with others. He wrote volumes used to this day by the Catholic Church as its standard statement of doctrine (*A Treasury of Saints, Barron's p. 24*).

Today's first reading relates the devotion of King David to the Lord; honoring and praising him with festivities upon the arrival of the Ark of God. In today's Gospel, when word is brought to Jesus that *his mother and brothers are waiting outside*, he tells the crowd that *whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother*.

***** 2015 *****

Focus: God loves us more than we will ever comprehend.

Jesus atoned for all our sins through his freely offered sacrifice on the cross. His blood redeems us and makes us whole and holy when we accept the gift of grace. By virtue of our baptism and through acts of faith and lives lived in service to Christ, we live more fully as daughters and sons of God.

In today's first reading, the words of the psalmist are used to establish that Jesus was sent by God, who desired a perfect sacrifice. In this context, Jesus is identified as offering the perfect sacrifice and fulfilling God's will. In the Gospel, Jesus identifies all those who do the will of God as members of his close family.

HOMILY

Focus: Through his sacrifice on the cross, Christ redeems us and makes us holy; by following God, we accept Christ's gift and enter into the family of God.



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Five hundred years ago, a young woman named Angela Merici was an orphan in Italy. During her teenage years she felt the unmistakable call of God and dedicated herself to God's service. She did not have extensive education or financial resources, but she had faith in God's goodness and a determination to follow where he led her. At one point, she was asked by the pope to serve as a nurse. Whether or not this was tempting, we don't know, but Saint Angela Merici said "no." She knew she was meant to do something else. She was called to serve disadvantaged young girls, to teach them the Christian faith, and to educate them. By so doing, Saint Angela Merici was following the teaching of Jesus in today's Gospel when he said, [For] whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.

At the time Saint Angela Merici was beginning her outreach, only wealthy girls had access to education. There was no precedent for what she saw as her calling. But she didn't answer to the trends in culture or education of her day. She answered to God, and firmly believed she was to teach young girls. To do this, she gathered other single women who vowed themselves to God but remained in the world, using their own homes as small schools for the girls they would gather from the streets. Saint Angela Merici's order, which came to be known as the Ursulines, survives to this day.

Saint Angela Merici was known for her humility and love for the girls in her care. We see in her a model of how to follow Christ and to love God by loving his children. The reading from Hebrews today reminds us of Christ's love for us, demonstrated by his tremendous sacrifice to redeem us. In the Gospel reading, Jesus assures us a place in his family if we do the will of the Father.

Let us reflect today on the life of Saint Angela Merici, and learn from her how to walk as sons and daughters of God. Her advice to her sisters is advice for us also: "Reflect," she said, "that in reality you have a greater need to serve the poor than they have of your service." With great hope, let us consider today our need to serve and in so doing, come to live more fully and faithfully as his disciples.

***** 2017 *****

FOCUS: Jesus' life and teachings demonstrate what it means to do God's will.

Jesus lived all of his life in perfect fidelity to the will of his Father. His teachings and example reveal to us what it means to be faithful to God and to do his will, so that we might live as brothers and sisters united in our love for Jesus and one day be judged worthy of eternal life in heaven.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The first reading from Hebrews reminds us that humankind was saved and redeemed by Christ's perfect sacrifice upon the cross. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches that all those who choose to follow him and do God's will are *brother and sister* to him.

***** 2018 *****

FOCUS: Strive to live faithfully and virtuously to follow the will of God.

Each of us is called to follow God's will so as to become members of Christ's family. How do we know we are following God's will? If we are in relationship with Jesus and strive to be faithful and virtuous, we can be confident that God will lead us on the path of life he sets forth.

LITURGY OF THE WORD



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In today's first reading, King David decides to move the ark, to the City of David and place it within his tent. In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus identifies everyone who does the Father's will as his *brother and sister and mother*.

***** 2020 *****

FOCUS: Jesus, fully present in the Eucharist, dwells among us.

All of Israel celebrates the Ark of the Covenant's entry into Jerusalem with dancing, shouting, music, sacrifices and a feast. What a model for us – to celebrate with joy the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. It is meant to transform us for the good of ourselves and the world.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

David brings the ark into the City of David, making sacrifices and dancing along the way. After the ark is in place, David makes offerings, blesses the people and distributes food. In the Gospel, when the mother of Jesus and his brothers come searching for him among the crowd, Jesus says that whoever does God's will is his *brother and sister and mother*.