

# Living the Word

Year A - 12th Sunday of Ordinary Time

A resource for personal, family  
and community prayer.

MEDITATING ON THE SUNDAY GOSPEL



“Do not be afraid...”

## *Gospel: Matthew 10:26-33*

<sup>26</sup>Jesus instructed the Twelve as follows: “Do not be afraid. For everything that is now covered will be uncovered, and everything now hidden will be made clear.

<sup>27</sup>What I say to you in the dark, tell in the daylight; what you hear in whispers, proclaim from the house-tops.

<sup>28</sup>Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; fear him rather who can destroy both body and soul in hell.

<sup>29</sup>Can you not buy two sparrows for a penny? And yet not one falls to the ground without your Father knowing.

<sup>30</sup>Why, every hair on your head has been

You are invited to read the  
*Gospel passage attentively,  
respectfully and reverently  
as a gift of God.*



counted.

<sup>31</sup>So there is no need to be afraid; you are worth more than hundreds of sparrows.

<sup>32</sup>So if anyone declares himself for me in the presence of men, I will declare myself for him in the presence of my Father in heaven.

<sup>33</sup>But the one who disowns me in the presence of men, I will disown in the presence of my Father in heaven.”

*Living the Word will take a break for the summer months and will return in September.*

*Wishing everyone a lovely summer from the Living the Word Team.*

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## Reading

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In the preceding verses Jesus has just warned his disciples that they will be persecuted just as he has been. He speaks words of encouragement, reassuring them that the truth will always prevail and will come to light.

Using the imagery of the sparrow and the hair on the head, he reassures them that nothing will ever happen to them without the Father knowing it – therefore they are safe and secure in his love, no matter what.

Jesus challenges his disciples to remain true to his values and, in doing so, they will experience the closeness of the Father. On the other hand, if they compromise these values they may well cut themselves off from the presence of God.

## Recognising

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You are invited to meditate on the passage, or any part of it, by letting it speak to your life experience until you feel to say **“I recognise this passage.”**

**v26. “Jesus instructed the Twelve as follows:”**

Can you remember seeing such a ‘leader’ or indeed being such a ‘leader’ yourself: one full of enthusiasm for a just cause and yet, at the same time, realistic and facing up to the challenges and obstacles ahead?

**v26. “What is now covered will be uncovered”**

Can you remember an experience of some terrible injustice eventually being corrected and brought to light?

**v28. “Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul.”**

Can you remember a situation where you had to take a strong stand on a matter of principle, which cost you greatly in terms of popularity, opportunity, even friendship? You held firm because you just knew that to compromise your integrity would have been the greatest loss of all.

**v31. “You are worth more than many sparrows”**

Can you remember a time of great vulnerability in your life- anxiety, loss, failure or rejection – when the care and support of loved ones reminded you of your true worth and value and this gave you the strength to keep going?

**v30. “Don’t be afraid... I know every hair...”**

When have you been there for others in such moments of weakness and fragility - your presence and words reminding them of their dignity, beauty and value?

**v32. “So if anyone declares himself for me in the presence of men”**

Can you remember an experience of struggling to stay true to your own cherished beliefs and values in the face of opposition and rejection? In your heart you just knew the strength had come from God.

## Responding

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Having recognised God's presence in life, you are invited to **respond** in your own words, in prayer (thanksgiving, repentance and petition).

Heavenly Father, I thank you for people in my life who have been upfront with me about the challenges and difficulties that I was likely to face on my chosen path. "Don't be afraid" are precious words that have often encouraged and strengthened me at critical moments in my life. Thank you for the courage and conviction of those who have spoken these words from their own life experience and from a place of love. Secure in their love and encouraged by their confidence in me, I have come through some difficult times.

Father, I ask forgiveness for the times when the going got tough and I ran away. For any cowardice, on my part, in the pursuit of truth and justice, I ask forgiveness. Lord, have mercy.

In the face of adversity give us the courage, conviction and determination to remain faithful to the wonderful mission you have entrusted to us, confident that the power of goodness, truth and love will always prevail. May we always walk in your presence knowing that every hair on our head is counted and that we are worth more than many sparrows.

## Resting

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You are invited to enter deep prayer by simply **resting** your heart in God's presence (Contemplative moment). The quiet repetition of a word or phrase from the passage might help you on this journey into greater silence and stillness, e.g. "Do not be afraid".



When have you been there for others in such moments of weakness and fragility - your presence and words reminding them of their dignity, beauty and value?

## Reflecting

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From your journey with this passage, you are now invited to **reflect**, and put into your own words, any new insights or understanding that you have received (Wisdom moment).

From your journey with this passage, what new insight has been given to you into the meaning of... parental love, or integrity, or justice or truth?

**Parental love not only knows the suffering of their child but lives it with them.**



# Children

## *Reading*

Jesus reassures the disciples and encourages them not to be afraid. Jesus reminds the disciples that they will come to recognise that they are each a valuable soul and worth more than hundreds of sparrows in the eyes of God, the Father, who has counted every hair on their head.

## *Recognising*

Can you remember a 'Jesus person', maybe a teacher or friend, who reminded you that you are a valuable soul, a completely unique creation in the eyes of God, the Father?

Can you remember a time when you encouraged another person who was afraid, maybe a friend, to focus on what makes them special and unique?

## *Responding*

Father, I thank You for the carers in my life, especially my parents, grandparents, teachers and friends, who are there for me

in my times of fear and remind me of my unique value in Your eyes.

Father, I am sorry for the times that I have missed the opportunity to remind other people of their unique value by saying and doing nasty things on the people that I meet each day.

Father, I ask that all people's hearts and minds may be open to see how valuable they are in Your eyes and that they will remind other people of this through their loving words and actions.

## *Resting*

Rest in the reassuring embrace of the Father by repeating "BE NOT AFRAID" for as long as it is possible. May your heart be filled with new life as you are drawn deeper into the Father's presence.

## *Reflecting*

The greatest way to forget fear is to remember your unique value

A simple summary of Lectio steps can be found in the porch of the church.