

# Living the Word

MEDITATING ON THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

Year A - Trinity Sunday

A resource for personal, family  
and community prayer.



“ HE GAVE  
HIS ONLY  
SON...”

## *Gospel: John 3:16-18*

<sup>16</sup>At that time, Jesus said to Nicodemus: “God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost but may have eternal life.

<sup>17</sup>For God sent his son into the world not to condemn the world, but so that through him the world might be saved.

<sup>18</sup>No one who believes in him will be condemned; but whoever refuses to believe is condemned already, because he has refused to believe in the name of God’s only Son.”

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



“God sent his son into the world  
not to condemn the world...”

For more information check out <https://lectio.newrydominican.com> which includes this week’s Sunday Gospel podcast Living the Word - Meditate on the Way, Pentecost Series.

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## Reading

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As always in Lectio our approach is to discover the Gospel passage in life experience and, in doing so, to enter into a fuller and deeper appreciation of life within the Trinity. God is a community of self-giving and self-sacrificing love in which we are invited to participate. Through the power of the Spirit Jesus lives in us and we live in him, and together we are one with the Father.

God's love for humanity has been revealed in giving away his only Son - the One who is most precious in his eyes. This self-giving love finds its fullest and highest expression on the Cross. The Father and Jesus give of themselves totally so that humankind might not be "lost" - living life without meaning, purpose or direction - but, rather, that we might have "eternal life", beginning in this life and fulfilled in the next.

God never condemns: his sole purpose is to give life, to save life, to enrich life. God's desire is that no human being should live without knowing that they are loved.

To believe in Jesus is to believe in God's unconditional love. Those who find this love are "saved" - nothing can destroy them anymore; those who don't find it, or who reject this love, are "condemned" to the prospect of a life of loneliness and emptiness.

## Recognising

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You are invited to meditate on the pas-

sage, or any part of it, by letting it speak to your life experience until you feel to say "I recognise this passage."

**v16. "He gave his only Son.."**

Can you remember a time when you gave over something or someone that was very precious to you (that you depended on, as important to you as your right arm!) in the hope that it would be a source of life for another?

**v17. "God sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world.."**

Can you remember an experience as a parent, teacher, friend etc. when you were concerned that someone was doing harm to themselves or to others? Out of love you confronted that person, not in a condemning way, but, rather, to save, to set free, to help them realize their full potential for goodness.

**v18. "No one who believes will be condemned.."**

When have you seen someone so secure in their love of God, or another human being, or both, who, at a time of crisis, showed remarkable inner strength, inner peace and resilience? Nothing was going to destroy their spirit.

As a reflection of life in the Trinity...

From life experience, can you remember a time of togetherness in community - being of one mind and one heart - where people moved in harmony with each other, giving of themselves freely and generously, secure in the knowledge of each other's love and support?

## 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).

Loving Father, thank you for the relationships where I have come to experience unconditional love in my life: parents, family members, friends who "gave their only son" so that I might have life. Thank you for their patience with me at times when I have let them down or let myself down. No matter how badly or how often I have messed up they were always there to welcome me back. Out of love they came "not to condemn but to save me" and to help me give of the best of myself. In them you have given me a real glimpse of your love for me.

Lord, I ask forgiveness for the times when I believed that your unconditional love was for myself alone, or for my church alone, or 'my people'. As a result, there have been times when I have been mean, jealous and narrow-minded in my dealings with others. Forgive me for doubting that your love, Father, is big enough to embrace all of humanity equally.

Heavenly Father, help us to work to create a true community where there is real respect, trust and care for each other. Let us work to create a world where no one is "condemned" to live without

love, where no one feels lost, useless or excluded, and where together we may all find our way to "eternal life."

## 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. "God so loved the world."



Heavenly Father, help us to work to create a true community where there is real respect, trust and care for each other.

## 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 have you learnt about the meaning of true love, or being saved, or community, or faith?

For example, from my meditation on this passage I now see more clearly that "the fullest expression of love is to be found in our readiness to give away that which is most precious to us for the sake of the other.



# Children

## *Reading*

Jesus shares that God the Father loved the world so much that He gave His only Son. God the Father decided to lovingly gift His Son by the power of the Holy Spirit so that whoever believes in His Son will not be lost and will live forever. God the Father desires to draw us into friendship with Him through His Son.

## *Recognising*

Can you remember a 'God person' who offered you a really precious gift, a gift of their time and their love, maybe a parent, grandparent or teacher, to help you live life to the full?

Can you remember a time when you were lost or excluded, maybe in school, and someone reached out to you and welcomed you into their friendship?

## *Responding*

Father, I thank You for the people in my life, especially my parents, grandparents and friends, who have gifted me their time

and their love, have reached out to me and welcomed me as I am.

Father, I am sorry for the times that I let other people down by my selfishness, when I couldn't find the time or love for others, led people down the wrong path, or excluded them.

Father, I ask that I may be granted the grace to offer myself, my time and my love so that others may come to know You and Your loving plans for their lives.

## *Resting*

Rest in the loving embrace of the Father by repeating "LIFE" 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*

Now is the time to make the best use of life by sharing the gift of your love.

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