



# THE LORD'S DAY

## 6th Sunday of Year A

The Watermead Apostolate offers this weekly page as a helpful guide and background to the readings used at the Catholic Mass for each Sunday of the Year.

The reading guides were written by Fr John Daley (RIP) who served as a Catholic priest in various parishes around the UK and world for 53 years.

Fr John co-founded Watermead in 1992 as a voice for people who wished to share understanding of living their faith through their God-given gifts and talents.

'The Lord's Day' incorporates some of those voices in this presentation and also through its many publications ~ books, resources, cards, music, etc.

Further information on what we produce, our story and the mission of our Christian apostolate can be found by visiting [www.watermead-apostolate.co.uk](http://www.watermead-apostolate.co.uk)

### First Reading

*Ecclesiasticus 15 : 15-20*

This Book was written early in the second century BC by Jesus Ben Sirach. It is a book of traditional wisdom, full of reverence and love for God. The author speaks of the spiritual qualities of a good person - honesty, humility, respect for parents, goodness to the poor, etc.

He has advice for people in various walks and stages of life, about friends and friendships, seeking happiness and then, in today's reading, of the glory of being free.

Chapter 15 speaks of Wisdom as a lovely lady friend, willing to be with us in all circumstances of life and offering gentle guidance as inspired by God. The Law is inspired by the fear (reverence) of God and gentle Wisdom is with us in our freedom to enrich our lives.

God is blameless, says today's reading, and if we use our freedom wisely we shall bless the Lord: but if we act unwisely we may foolishly choose to blame God for making us free! All through life the Lord is watching over us, wanting and willing us to choose good.

### Second Reading

*1 Corinthians 2 : 6-10*

Paul is sad. The community he helped found in Corinth is fractured. He had lived with them for eighteen months, forming them as the Mystical Body of Christ: now the body is torn, rivalries caused by pride and envy have blighted that unity. Superficial human wisdom and intelligence have covered the simplicity of speaking with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Goodness and not cleverness should inspire our thoughts and actions, urges Paul, and we should make place for everyone.

Paul reminds the Corinthians that his simple message was of a crucified Christ not clever argument and philosophy. But that simplicity is God's way - open to everyone! No one is excluded who can understand the love of a God who gives his son for our salvation and whose son is willing to die for love of us. Love is the simplest and most profound of messages.

In today's reading Paul tells the people that no one has heard the message such as he shared with them in his stay in Corinth. It is beyond human understanding to discover or to express, but is open to those who love and believe.

### Gospel Reading

*Matthew 5 : 17-37*

We are at the Sermon on the Mount, a wonderful collection of Jesus' teachings gathered together by Matthew and imaginatively placed on a hillside as a conversation between Jesus and the apostles, away from the crowds. He draws from the lovely lessons of the wisdom of the Old Testament, translating them into a new message suffused with his own ideals. The Scriptures are being fulfilled, the Old is becoming New.

How careful Jesus is to remind the disciples that the Law is being fulfilled, not changed or abolished. All that was good stays, but it needs to be understood at more profound levels. Quarrelling and anger are still forbidden and at a deeper level: reconciliations between people must be achieved before we dare offer prayer and worship to God. Good sense should guide us how to act before the Law weighs too heavily on us.

The power of thought to be evil in itself is brought out strongly - the thought can be the deed! Marriage is even more wonderfully a union than his disciples might have appreciated and should be seen as God sees it. And the power of human speech to determine life and lives echoes the power of thought. Action is not all important: thought and speech can be more powerful in controlling lives. Simplicity in speech, even in simple words, needs to be understood.

### Wisdom from the Saints



"Be kind to one another"

St Paul

### The Message is Simple

Choose good and avoid evil  
Christ crucified speaks love  
Think, speak, act simply

### Questions of Faith

**Ideal or Law** From the beginning of the Church the problems of unsuitable marriages, unfaithfulness and remarriage, have been with us. Church authority has framed laws to meet different times and circumstances, been judged as being too lax and too severe, has struggled to help people understand what annulment is, and been open to criticism as different interpretations are offered by canon lawyers in different parts of the Church.

Translating an ideal into a law is difficult, and words are always open to interpretation. The culture of law varies around the world and the Church has to accept and acknowledge such variations. How do we "prove" a forced marriage? How do we solve the questions of polygamy in mission territories? How do we accept changes in personality and sexual orientation, bearing in mind the various cultures of our world? The answers are to be discovered, they are not set. The Church prays for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in every age to frame Church laws that reflect Gospel ideals.

This week I shall . . .  
pray for unhappy people

### People of God

Cyril and Methodius were two wonderful brothers who brought the Gospel to the Slav peoples. They are buried in the crypt of the church of St Clements in Rome - having brought the remains of Pope St Clement back to Rome from the Crimea. Their feast day is 14th February - they are our new Valentines, replacing the Roman martyr, the original St Valentine.