

First Reading: Leviticus 13:1-2,45-46
Response: (Ps.31:7) ***“You are my hiding place Lord you surround me with cries of deliverance”***
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 31:1-2, 5-11
Second Reading: I Corinthians 10:31-11:1
Gospel: Mark 1:40-45.

As Jesus Christ in the Gospel was friend of outcasts and came to save sinners, so is he our friend today. The man who walked by Galilee, is now the Risen Lord giving us new life.

***“There lived a man who walked by Galilee
 There lived a man who longed for harmony
 And the things He said were beautiful,
 And the things He did were wonderful,
 And he wanted us to follow in His way.***

***The heavens rang with His cry
 High on Calvary’s hill,
 Although they left Him to die
 He lives still;”***

(A. Pinnock)

Even lepers in Israel were treated as friends by Jesus, although Israel saw them as outcasts and sinners. Leprosy, טַרְסָרַת, *tsara’ath*, means struck down, smitten with disease, defiled and because of contamination, ***“he must live apart outside camp”*** (Lev.13:46), for punishment.

Leprosy, seen as a spiritual blemish, fell under a religious ban. It meant not having a life, cut off from family, friends and even Church. It was a self-condemnation where one has to cry out ***“Unclean, unclean”*** (Lev. 13:45), living in isolation and desolation, friendless and forsaken.

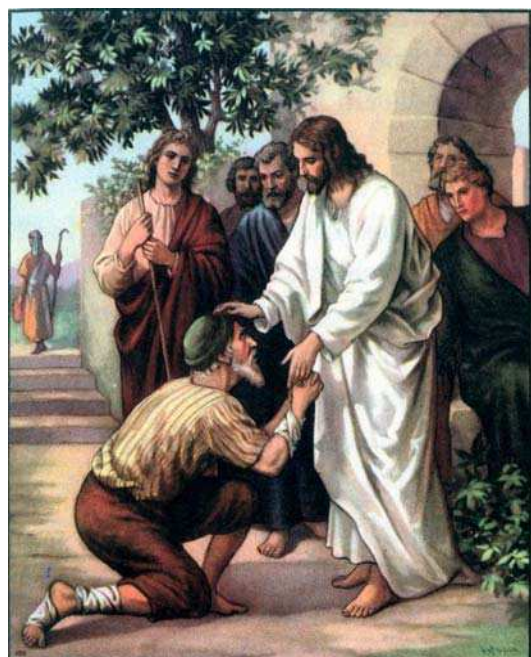
The leper/sinner cannot pull himself up by his own boot-strings. Salvation is in God alone: ***“You are my hiding place, O Lord; you surround me with cries of deliverance”*** (Ps. 31:7).

God is our friend. He will cleanse us. Trust in God, like David when he sinned: ***“You, Lord, have forgiven the guilt of my sin”*** (Ps. 31:5).

A leper places his trust in the Lord. ***“If you want to, you can cure me”*** (Mk. 1:40). He knew Jesus could heal but would he do it?

Jesus shows the depth of his love and friendship; ***“Of course I want to,”*** he says, ***“Be cured”*** (Mk. 1: 41). The lesson for us, is not to put an ‘if’ to prayer. Just ask and trust God as a friend to do it his way.

Trust and friendship in God is the apostolic way. Paul as an apostle, says, ***“Take me for your model, as I take Christ”*** (1 Cor.10:31). It also means being friends to all, as Christ is to us. ***“Never do anything offensive to anyone”*** (1 Cor.10:31). Follow Christ’s way. He is our Friend



whose light shines in the darkness of our brokenness, sin and pain, giving us new life.

***“There lives a man whose light now leads the way,
There lives a man whose voice still speaks to-day
For the things He said were beautiful,
And the things He did were wonderful,
And he wanted us to follow in His way.***

***The heavens rang with His cry
High on Calvary’s hill,
Although they left Him to die
He lives still.”***

Read the **Gospel**, seeing the wonderful things Jesus does for all men and women. (*Scripture*)

See in the **Liturgy**, Eucharist, a divine encounter with our Risen Lord and Friend. (*Sacrament*)

Our **Faith** teaches that we image God and can have an intimate relationship with Him. (*Creed*)

Our Faith is not just a talking faith but a **living** Faith. We have to give *Witness* to relationship and friendship with the Lord and with others.

FOR THE CHILDREN

Read and explain to children the message of the Gospel, how Jesus is our friend and healer.

Give examples of how we meet him as Risen Lord today, in Liturgy of Word and Sacrament.

Use texts, Teachings of the Church, such as catechisms, showing Jesus as our loving Lord and Friend.

Encourage children to seek ways of responding to Jesus’ desire to be our friend. (Witness)

FOR TEENAGERS (*Shared Christian Praxis*)

My Present Action: *What does having Jesus as a friend mean?*

Your Story and Vision: *How deep is your friendship with the Lord? What does it mean to you? Is there any change of attitude?*

Church’s Story: *How does the Church proclaim Jesus as our Friend?*

Church’s Story and Your Story: *How have you lived with the Church, the body of Christ?*

Your Vision and Church’s Vision: *Where are you going with Christ and his Church?*

RCIA

Friendship, for Jesus goes deeper than conventions. Compassion and charity is more important than law and ritual prohibitions. Ultimately what counts is the deep personal relationship between God and the human person. Intimacy with God is based on the fact of the human person being the image of God, *imago Dei*. The Catechism teaches that “God created man in his image and established him in his friendship. A spiritual creature, man can live this friendship only in free submission to God,” and goes on to say that “Man is dependent on his Creator, and subject to the laws of creation and to the moral norms that

govern the use of freedom.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*. 396)

LIFE EXPERIENCE

In order to communicate, friends speak a common language. God spoke Hebrew to Moses. Had he spoken in a language foreign to Moses, like Chinese, English or Zulu, he would not have understood a word. Liturgy is the language of the Church, God speaking to his people and the people speaking to God. It should be simple, loud and clear, not confusing. I know religious people still trying to cope with new translations in their worship, notwithstanding the debatable ways it was expedited, seemingly more in a spirit of *revanchism* than *aggiornamento*. It is no secret that the *curia* changed the goal-posts to their advantage. One still wonders at how literary, grammatical, or even spoken, is our latest liturgical English. How much, in the spirit of Vatican II, was the principle of subsidiarity applied, allowing for wider consultation and lay participation, accepting that the Holy Spirit is in the whole People of God, *qua magisterium* and *qua sensus fidelium*? A wide expertise has to be recognized when dealing with the language of the people, including English. English spoken in America and South Africa is quite different to Pidgin-English in New Guinea, which is an official language. Don't forget, *Koine* and the *Vulgate*, common Greek and Latin respectively, were languages of the common people, whose prayers were not necessarily philosophic Greek nor classic Latin. Why can't liturgical language be like Divine revelation, God communicating in the language of the people?

LITTLE ANGELINA

When I asked Angelina whose her best friend, she replied “Yorky,” a yorkshire terrier better known as “Terror.” It does what it likes under her divine protection, having rights to lie on her bed and interrupt her studies. He is treated like “the great Khan who had his subjects at his service.”⁽ⁱ⁾ In fact their relationship is pragmatic, happily using each other at their own convenience. When will Angelina know a friendship deeper than puppy-love, one that can flower in true love and sacrifice?

- (i) The great Khan referred to above, is *Kublai Khan*, whom Angelina learns about when she reads '**THE TRAVELS OF MARCO POLO**.' Signet Classics, Penguin Group, New York, USA. 2004, p.7.

I found Marco Polo interesting and easy reading, even for Angelina. He writes about his travels from one end of Asia to the other and meeting the great Mongol Emperor, *Kublai Khan*. The Khan's Tartars, later known as the 'Golden Horde,' created a vast empire in the East. Marco describes the great wealth and power of the Emperor and claimed his confidence. He saw the need of spreading the Gospel to the Khan and his people, hoping they will know Jesus as their Friend. He believed the Church lost a golden opportunity when he and his father appealed to Rome as the Khan's emissaries to send missionaries.

Leaving his native Venice, as a young man, Polo accompanied his merchant father and uncle to the far east. His description of places and experiences, will stretch the imagination, even Angelina's.

IMPORTANT WORD: *παντοθεν* (Greek) '**all around**' (Mk.1.45), *mikol-avarayv* (Hebrew)

In the original Greek, *παντοθεν* is the closing word of the Gospel today. It also expresses the catholicity of Christ's friendship, reaching out to '**all around**,' as the word means in the Bible.⁽ⁱ⁾ In Latin, it is *undique*, meaning everywhere. The Hebrew is '**avarayv**' meaning other side and regions beyond. It is from the word is '*avar*, 'pass over' (Passover) and could also mean "forgiveness and healing." This word is seemingly appropriate for Jewish Christians⁽ⁱⁱ⁾, in preference to other words, such as *bekol-maqom*, meaning everywhere, or '*eyzor*, simply referring to regions beyond.

'*Avar* also expresses 'transition' and to 'enter into a covenant,' '*avar beberith*. It is interesting to see Christian Jews use the simplicity and depth of their ancient language, maintaining the linguistic connection and theology of the Old Testament to the New.

(i) **THE JERUSALEM BIBLE**. Standard Edition. London. Dartman, Longman & Todd. London.1966. (Mk. 1:45).

(ii) **Sefri HABERITH HAHADOSHAH—THE NEW TESTAMENT**. The Society for Distributing the Holy Scriptures to the Jews, Edgware, England. (Mk. 1:45.).

Sefri haBerith haHadoshah means Book of the New Covenant, which is the Jewish way of expressing the New Testament. My interest in Hebrew goes back to my roots, my paternal grandfather, Samuel Moss being a Canadian Jew, who married Angela Dunn (daughter of a white Zulu chief, who became the mother of my father).

When I studied at Corpus Christi, in the 1960's and stayed with the Sisters of Sion in London, I made acquaintance with rabbinical students of Leo Baeck College. Later, at further studies in Berkeley, USA, I experienced some of the Talmudic discussions of Jewish scholars. A visitor in the USA was *Geza Vermes* a Christian Jew and renown biblical scholar, who wrote a book called 'Jesus the Jew.' Geza believed Jesus was the Messiah. Later, disillusioned by the Church and its hierarchy, he reverted to Judaism.

N.B.: *The Hebrew New Testament is a translation from the original Greek, not the other way round.*

Watchword: "**People from all around would come to him**" (Mk. 1:45)

Hebrew: **Wayevo'u 'elayv mikol-'avarayv.**

Greek: **Erchonto pros auton pantothen.**

Latin: **Conveniebant ad eum undique.**

Afrikaans: **Mense het van alle kante af na Hom toe gekom.**

Zulu: **Babuthana kuye bevela ezindaweni zonke.**

Xhosa: **Abantu ke babesiza kuye, bevela macala onke.**

Sotho: **Mme batho ba tla ho yena ba etswa kahohle.**

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CATECHETICS

Lesson 60:

CATECHESIS IN MODERN TIME: EXPERIENTIAL BASED

Experiential catechesis is **experienced-based** learning, catechisms from life experience and human situations.

Life Story and Catechesis: We all have a story to tell, our life story. It is a story full of events and experiences. Socrates said, "**Know thyself.**" This can be done by examining your story. The ancient Greek philosophers believed that an unexamined life is not worth living. For the Christian this is not all. One must see one's life story in the context of a greater story, the great Story of God which involves all His creation and His plan of salvation, the **Christian Story**. Catechesis relates our stories with the great **Story of God**. It means examining our life experiences and seeing how we live our life with God.

Creation and Catechesis: God's creation, like the bible, can be a book of revelation. Creation reveals the hand of the Creator, Scientists cannot fathom the wonders and mysteries of the **great universe** or even the ultimate functionings of the smallest **atoms** and cells. An awareness of creation deepens the sense of wonder at the mystery of life, our origins and finality. All creation is waiting for the revelation of the children of God" and it is infused with the mystery of

the Incarnation. “Christ is building the **Kingdom of God**. Creation and the **human** person have a role to play in it.

Culture and Catechesis: Culture is a way of living. It takes into account the history, traditions and life style of a people. Every **culture** has its genius and downfalls, with its values, customs and language. Good and bad can be discovered in every culture. The challenge is to examine one’s culture and appreciate the good. **Vatican II** says that the seeds of the Word are hidden in every culture. There has to be a healthy **dialogue** between one’s faith and culture developing into a deeper living faith.

Apostolates and Catechesis: **Faith sharing groups** and apostolates like the Y.C.W. (Young Christian Workers) with their ‘enquiries’ methods and examination of **life situations** can be a practical means of **experiential catechesis**. Small Christian Communities (SCCs) as witnessed in Latin America and the *uJamaa* model in East Africa, can also be a means of evangelization and catechesis, where the Church makes options of preference for the poor and is in fact a special way of being Church.

Modern World and Catechesis: We are living in an ‘**electronic age**’. Marshall McLuhan and Pierre Babin describe its whole effect as a new culture. The mass media and **audio-visual** communication, such as television, radio and newspapers, have changed people’s way of thinking, values, morals and life. Ancient truths of faith and life, as formerly presented in traditional ways are reappraised in content and method. Life is experienced in a vastly different way to our ancestors by whose values we live. We have to examine this new culture in which we live; and discern when, how and where evangelization and catechesis can be effective for growth in faith in the modern world.

KOINONIA	LITURGEIA	WORD	KERYGMA	CATECHESIS	MARTYRIA	DIAKONIA
COMMUNITY	WORSHIP	BIBLE	PREACHING	TEACHING	LIFE	MINISTRY
CHURCH	LITURGY	SCRIPTURE	PROCLAMATION	DOCTRINE	WITNESS	SERVICE

