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Sunday Mass Study Notes for Sunday, 7-10-2016



Welcome back to the Sunday Mass notes for **7-10-2016**. This week we begin with a reading from the book of Deuteronomy, which means "second law" or "copy of the law." A whole new generation had grown up since Moses first gave the law, so the new generation is given a review of the history of Israel since the Exodus and a modified and expanded review of the law. The second reading, from Paul's letter to the Colossians contains an essential explanation of who Jesus is. The final excerpt for this week is the recording of Jesus telling the very familiar story of the Good Samaritan. The story itself is amazing, but its application to the hearers (and today's readers) is most significant.

Introduction to the First Reading:

To understand literature of any kind, it is always important to consider the context of the passage under consideration. This is especially true of the Bible, since it is the inerrant Word of God, is given in a historical setting, and is intended to be relevant to the lives of the current and subsequent hearers or readers. Verse 10 of today's reading actually begins in the middle of a sentence, so we should look back several verses to see the context. Moses has promised (v. 9) that God would make His people prosperous both in the produce of their work and in their progeny. He will take delight in them . . . (now see today's reading).

First Reading:

Deuteronomy 30:10-14 NAS95 10 if you obey the LORD your God to keep His commandments and

His statutes which are written in this book of the law, if you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and soul. 11 For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach. 12 It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?' 13 Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will cross the sea for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?' 14 But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it.

Two conditions are given for this promised blessing of God: "if you obey" and "if you turn to the Lord … with all your heart and soul." It has been suggested that "obedience" may be the key word in Deuteronomy, because "obey" and "obedient" are used at least ten times in some translations. Not only does God expect His people to obey His commands, but Moses says that God has made His command easy for them to grasp. Verse 14 suggests that when God's people obey, He enables them to understand His Word (His commands), because they are "near," "in your mouth and in your heart."

Many people are seeking God as if He were unreachable, so transcendent that human beings cannot find Him. Although sin will surely separate a person from God, He remains available to the true seeker. Isaiah wrote, "Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near" (Isaiah 55:6). One of the strong lessons from Deuteronomy is that obedience is necessary in order to know God. Jesus Himself said, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them" (John 14.23).

Introduction to the Second Reading:

Colossians is one of the so-called "Prison Epistles," because the Apostle Paul wrote them to various churches in Asia Minor while he was jailed in Rome. His writings usually include a succinct but rich theological passage, explaining doctrine for the benefit of young believers and their leaders. Those deep teaching passages are most often followed by very practical instruction about Christian living. Today's reading is a primary statement of who Jesus is. One New Testament scholar notes, "In Colossians we have the most thorough presentation of Christology in the New Testament." The substance of the epistle may be summed up in a key verse (3:11), "Christ is all and in all."

Second Reading:

Colossians 1:15-20 NAS95 15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities–all things have been created through Him and for Him. 17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. 18 He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. 19 For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, 20 and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

Paul concludes a very wonderful prayer for the Colossians with a reference to God's "beloved son, in whom we have redemption" (v. 14). Then, our reading for today begins, detailing who this "beloved son" is. First, "He is the image of the invisible God." We learn two very important ideas here. "Image" means an exact copy; in other words, there is no difference in essence between God and Jesus. Also, since God is invisible, He has made it possible for us to see Him in physical form through the incarnation of Jesus. John's Gospel is helpful here: "No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known (1:18).

The term "firstborn of all creation" has been confusing to many, thinking that Jesus was a created being, not having existed as God before creation. However, what Paul has in mind here are the rights and privileges of a firstborn son, especially the son of a monarch. The expression was used of David in Psalm 89:27, "I will make him the firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth." So, the idea is of priority, not birth order.

Speaking of creation, Paul teaches that it is Jesus by whom everything has come into being: "All things have been created through Him." Not only that, they were created "for Him." He is supreme over creation. In fact, everything in the world is held together by Him. Jesus is the creator and upholder of the physical universe, and He is also the creator and head of the church, that body of believers who, by faith, have become a part of His body (a metaphor for the church) of which He is the head.

If we learn nothing else from this passage, it should be very clear to the reader that Jesus is to "have first place in everything." He created it all; He sustains it; He will bring it all to completion when God's gracious plan of redemption is fulfilled. And that plan is made possible because in God's "good pleasure" Jesus provided the means of reconciliation with God by the "blood of the cross."

Introduction to the Gospel Reading:

We sometimes read the story of the Good Samaritan, admiring his kindness and generosity in helping an unfortunate stranger who had been mugged (in today's parlance). To profit most from the story, we must recognize the circumstances that prompted Jesus to tell the story and understand both the the question that prompted the interchange and the answer. It's far more than an interesting tale. Its lessons may require some tough introspection and application.

Gospel Reading:

Luke 10:25-37 NAS95 25 And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" 26 And He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?" 27 And he answered, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF." 28 And He said to him, "You have answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE." 29 But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" 30 Jesus replied and said, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho,

and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead. 31 And by chance a priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion, 34 and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him. 35 On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.' 36 Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' hands?" 37 And he said, "The one who showed mercy toward him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do the same."

A lawyer asks Jesus about eternal life. He asks, "What do I have to *do* to earn it?" Jesus reminds him of the basic law of God, which the lawyer acknowledges: to love God and your neighbor. When Jesus affirms his answer, He tells the inquirer to do it, to love God and his neighbor. "Who is my neighbor? the lawyer asks, and Jesus then relates the parable that has become so familiar to us today.

In the story there are four characters that are easily identified. The injured man is a traveler on a busy road between two cities. Three other travelers are noted: a priest who passes by the victim, perhaps because he thought he was dead and to touch a dead body would make the priest unclean until he went through certain required cleanings. The Levite was another religious person, who undoubtedly served in the temple or synagogue. Very likely, he also wanted to avoid the uncleanness associated with a possibly dead man. Finally, a stranger came along who was from Samaria. Most likely, the injured man was Jewish, perhaps identified by his clothing. Although Samaritans and Jews did not associate, this traveling Samaritan took pity on the victim and offered him assistance at some personal cost.

As someone has said, Jesus' parables are earthly stories with heavenly meanings. So, as we hear the story, we wonder what is the basic lesson to be learned. Who does each of the characters represent: the injured traveler, the priest, the Levite, and the Samaritan? Simply put, the first two represent people who, though religious, put feelings and convenience ahead of compassion and help. The Samaritan pictures the person who, though of a different religious and/or ethnic background, has compassion for someone in need and freely offers help. But the critical question is how do we identify the neighbor?

In answer to the Jesus' question, the lawyer replies that the neighbor is "the one who showed mercy," the Samaritan. Most of us misread the story. We seem to think Jesus is telling us to identify the needy around us as the neighbors who need help? No, He is teaching that we who see someone in need are to be the neighbor who brings aid and compassion to the needy even when they are not "our kind," and may be different from us in many ways.

We should also observe that the lawyer's initial question assumes that he—or we—can *do* something to inherit eternal life. The action of the Good Samaritan is evidence of a heart that is right before God. The heart that has a genuine love for God and serves Him comes to Him by faith and serves by

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His grace.

Bottom Line: Questions for Reflection

1. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, the roles of the characters are easy to identify. In real life it is much harder to recognize the needs of the strangers and then to do something about it in a timely manner. In what ways do you see opportunities for you to be a compassionate neighbor to someone in need, even someone very different from you?

2. Whom among your neighbors and workplace could you consider as a "Samaritan" in that they are different from you in terms of beliefs and culture? What are some ways in which understanding this in advance may help you to accept help from others?

Readings for the Week

Note: For a listing of readings for the Roman Catholic Mass, visit this web site:

http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/071016.cfm

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lectionary: 105

Source(s):

Online Scripture verses for most Bible versions can be found at: http://www.biblegateway.com/

Scripture quotations taken from the NASB

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Mass Study Notes for Sunday 6-28-2015

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Welcome back to the Sunday Mass notes for **6-28-2015**. This week we open with Saint Paul's letter to the Corinthian believers, encouraging them to be generous with their suffering brothers and sisters in Christ. The Gospel lesson tells the story of Jesus healing two marginalized people: a little girl who died and a woman who suffered with bleeding for many years. In both passages, we see that the heart of God is tender toward those who are suffering.

The first reading is from the Apocrypha. Our study will begin with the second reading, which is from Saint Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians.

Second Reading

On his third missionary journey, Saint Paul encouraged Gentile Christians to help their struggling brothers and sisters in Christ who were impacted by a severe famine in Jerusalem (see Acts 24:17). In this part of his letter to the believers in Corinth, he is urging them to excel at being financially generous and to complete their pledge of support to those who are in physical need. In the first part of this section, he commends them for leading the way in their faith and conduct. He then asks them to become leaders in the area of generosity. So it is not only important to want to give, but to follow through and actually sacrifice on behalf of others. He calls the act of giving a "gracious work" (v. 7). He then ties in this "gracious work" with the sacrifice that Christ made on our behalf, which is the motivating force behind the compassionate giving that should characterize Christians.

(Verses 8, 10, and 11 which were omitted from the reading were included in order to provide the full context and meaning).

2 Corinthians 8:7-15 NAS95 7 "But just as you abound in everything, in faith and utterance and knowledge and in all earnestness and in the love we inspired in you, see that you abound in this

gracious work also. 8 I am not speaking this as a command, but as proving through the earnestness of others the sincerity of your love also. 9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich. 10 I give my opinion in this matter, for this is to your advantage, who were the first to begin a year ago not only to do this, but also to desire to do it. 11 But now finish doing it also, so that just as there was the readiness to desire it, so there may be also the completion of it by your ability. 12 For if the readiness is present, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have. 13 For this is not for the ease of others and for your affliction, but by way of equality– 14 at this present time your abundance being a supply for their need, so that their abundance also may become a supply for your need, that there may be equality; 15 as it is written, "HE WHO gathered MUCH DID NOT HAVE TOO MUCH, AND HE WHO gathered LITTLE HAD NO LACK."

Saint Paul points out a few key principles to encourage the Corinthian believers to follow through on their pledge to provide financial relief to the starving Christians in Jerusalem. Paul challenged the Corinthians to be generous in giving the things that God had so generously provided, saying that they "abound in everything" else (v. 7), so why would generosity not be part of their reputation as well? This calling to give was not a command but rather a challenge that Paul provided to reveal the true "sincerity of [their] love" (v. 8b). He is clear that this calling to gracious giving is his opinion, but from what we know about the other times that Paul has given his personal views it is a sound biblical principle if not an outright command.

Paul went on to explain how Jesus was the example of sacrificial giving by saying, "though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich" (v. 9b –ff). Paul's reasoning is twofold. One, if the Corinthians give during their times of prosperity they can count upon other Christians to give to them during their own time of need. The most basic decency of a human citizen of the world is in giving to others in need out of one's abundance. Second, sacrificial giving is evidence of their true calling to serve God. Although a seed must of course be initially planted, it doesn't go far without proper watering and continued nurturing. Paul admonished the Corinthians not to just begin the good work of giving, but to carry it to completion (v. 11). He closed with a quote from Exodus 16:18, a passage in which Moses explained how through God's sovereign control everyone gathered manna in the exact amount that they required. In the new economy of God after the Exodus God called the Hebrews and all people subsequent to them to act as His agent in distributing goods evenly from each person's excess to fill other people's needs.

What was happening back then historically can be a lesson to us in our own day and age. First, he calls them to recognize the connectedness of the universal church. He challenged them to step up to the plate and become an example for the other churches, who were already contributing generously to the cause of helping their brothers and sisters. Paul wrote to this group of believers in a previous letter about the connectedness of the church by calling Christians the "body of Christ". In explaining

how each believer is interdependent, he said, "And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it" (1 Corinthians 12:26). What happens to one believer (good or bad) impacts the rest of the body. This interconnectedness with the universal church should awaken our sensitivity to others around us; those we know and even those we do not know. Being others-oriented can release us from the tyranny of self-absorption, which is more oppressive than we often recognize. God's structure of connecting us to the larger body of Christ and giving us an awareness of others in need is a blessing to our spiritual growth and maturity.

The second main point that Paul makes about giving in this passage is that the motive behind the giving is more important than the actual amount of the gift. He emphasizes that generous giving can be an outward display of sincerity of heart and love for others. The supreme example of generous giving is Jesus Christ Himself. Though Christ had all of the privileges of heaven, He gave up His rightful place of authority and riches to submit Himself to the poverty of this world. One of the early hymns of the church focused on Christ's humility for our sake and reinforces the theme of why we should be generous to others. It is a way that we can show the world who Jesus is.

Philippians 2:5-11 NAS95 5 "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

The end result is that through Christ's lowering of Himself to our poverty level, He could bring us to a place of richness beyond what this world could offer. Being motivated by Christ's great sacrifice for us is a sign of really understanding the immensity of grace that has been given to us.

Another important and encouraging principle that Saint Paul gives in regard to giving is that God entrusts us with different amounts of financial means so that we might steward resources in a way that promotes equality and unity in the body of Christ. Some parts of our world have very little in regard to material resources. These ones who are not rich in the world's eyes are often rich in other resources, such as faith, relationships and having an eternal perspective. Paul says that their richness can supply what a materially wealthy community of believers might not have. And a materially wealthy community can benefit those who are impoverished by giving sacrificially and providing a sense of unity among the believers (see also 1 Timothy 6:11-19). So while God could magically provide for all of the needs in the world, He does not override the will of believers, but instead, trusts us to live in the power of Christ so that we participate in this "gracious work". We have received grace and so we give graciously to others out of the abundance of what Christ has given to us. This passage encourages all believers to consider our part in being the hands and feet of Christ.

Gospel Reading

Mark 5:21-43 NAS95 21 When Jesus had crossed over again in the boat to the other side, a large crowd gathered around Him; and so He stayed by the seashore. 22 One of the synagogue officials named Jairus came up, and on seeing Him, fell at His feet 23 and implored Him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter is at the point of death; please come and lay Your hands on her, so that she will get well and live." 24 And He went off with him; and a large crowd was following Him and pressing in on Him. 25 A woman who had had a hemorrhage for twelve years, 26 and had endured much at the hands of many physicians, and had spent all that she had and was not helped at all, but rather had grown worse– 27 after hearing about Jesus, she came up in the crowd behind Him and touched His cloak. 28 For she thought, "If I just touch His garments, I will get well." 29 Immediately the flow of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction. 30 Immediately Jesus, perceiving in Himself that the power proceeding from Him had gone forth, turned around in the crowd and said, "Who touched My garments?" 31 And His disciples said to Him, "You see the crowd pressing in on You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'" 32 And He looked around to see the woman who had done this. 33 But the woman fearing and trembling, aware of what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. 34 And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your affliction." 35 While He was still speaking, they came from the house of the synagogue official, saying, "Your daughter has died; why trouble the Teacher anymore?" 36 But Jesus, overhearing what was being spoken, said to the synagogue official, "Do not be afraid any longer, only believe." 37 And He allowed no one to accompany Him, except Peter and James and John the brother of James. 38 They came to the house of the synagogue official; and He saw a commotion, and people loudly weeping and wailing. 39 And entering in, He said to them, "Why make a commotion and weep? The child has not died, but is asleep." 40 They began laughing at Him. But putting them all out, He took along the child's father and mother and His own companions, and entered the room where the child was. 41 Taking the child by the hand, He said to her, "Talitha kum!" (which translated means, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). 42 Immediately the girl got up and began to walk, for she was twelve years old. And immediately they were completely astounded. 43 And He gave them strict orders that no one should know about this, and He said that something should be given her to eat.

This is a powerful story of Jesus' healing power and His compassion for marginalized people. The two females in this story ran parallel lives until the day that Jesus came to town. The day the little girl was born must have brought great joy to Jairus and his family twelve years earlier. Jairus was a religious man, obviously respected in the community, which is shown by his upfront request to have Jesus come to his home to heal his daughter. At the time when this little girl came into the world, the woman with the hemorrhage began her long journey on her desperate reach toward her last hope, Jesus. Twelve years was a long time to be struggling with a bleeding issue, which would have marginalized her in the ceremonial world of the Jews as "unclean" in everyday social settings. After twelve long years of seeking help in every possible form, it is understandable how desperate she would have been. She was so desperate that she was willing to go against the social taboo of being in a crowd of people even though she was "unclean" in order to reach out and touch Jesus' garment in hopes of being healed.

In the end, Jesus did heal her, but not without correcting her theology. While she placed all her hope in touching his garment, as if his clothes held some special force that could be invoked by her grasping reach, He helped her to see that it was her faith that so moved the heart of God to heal her. This is an important point for all of us to recognize. Faith is living as if something unseen and unrealized is actually at work. When your faith is put in God, it means to lean your full weight on Him, as if there is no other lifeline. The Bible describes it this way: "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). It also says that without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6). Jesus thought that is was important for her to understand that she was healed by reaching out to the right Person, not because of her superstitious beliefs.

Now that the woman was healed and made clean, it was time for Jesus to turn his attention to the original request that brought Him on the journey to begin with, Jairus' daughter. She was sick when Jairus went to implore Jesus to come heal her. But in this delay, she died, and the report came to Jairus that all hope for healing was gone. Jesus, though, encouraged Jairus to have faith and believe that He could not only heal a sick daughter, but that He could also bring her back to life. The Gospel records other incidents where Jesus raised people back to life: the widow's son (Luke 7:13-15) and Lazarus (John 11:43-44). These important accounts were recorded so that we could believe and have life that is truly life in Jesus. Saint John put it this way: "Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:30-31).

How does this story contribute to our understanding of Jesus and the role of humans as we seek to have relationship with Him? We learn that Jesus is God because He has power to heal and to raise the dead. While magicians and charlatans could conjure up evil powers to perform signs and wonders, no one but God has the authority to bring people back from the dead. It is clear from this account that the Gospel writer is making a case for Jesus' divinity and authority. Our response, then, is will we believe and surrender to His divinity and authority in our own lives? Will we come to Him as the One who said that He is the way, the truth and the LIFE (John 14:6)? Or will we try to find life on our own terms, pursuing a little bit of religion to satisfy our guilty conscience? Obviously, the Gospel writers went to great lengths to provide enough information about Jesus to convince us of His rightful place as King and Lord of our lives. May our search for His leadership in our lives be as desperate and as focused as that of Jairus and the woman with the bleeding issue.

As I type, I am reminded of a recent incident that has left me desperate for Jesus to be in control of my life and to experience His lordship over my knee-jerk reaction to defend myself. I was criticized for not doing part of my job well. At first I wanted to defend myself and prove my worth to others. But after taking a deep breath, I turned to Jesus and silently asked Him what He wanted me to learn in this situation. I still don't know what that is, but I trust that He will help me to let Him be Lord of my life so that I don't have to rely on my accomplishments or my self-defense to prop up my ego. Instead of taking matters into my own hands and trying to find life in my own sense of self-righteousness, I can rely on Him, leaning my full weight on His perfection. I can learn from people's

criticism and solicit feedback so that I can learn and grow. We are all a work in progress!

Bottom Line: Questions for Reflection

1. How do you feel when you consider the great compassion that Jesus had for the two women who were in need? What needs do you have that you can talk to Him about today? How does knowing His compassion for you encourage your approach to Him?

2. In both passages, Jesus was highlighted as One who has ultimate power. In the New Testament lesson, He became poor to bring us to His heavenly riches and in the Gospel lesson, He was able to heal and raise the dead. When you look at your life and the obstacles that seem to get you down, how does knowing that Christ has ultimate power influence your walk of faith? Sometimes, we are discouraged because we do not see Him using His power to do what we think He should do on our behalf. But take a few moments and ask Him to help you to see where He wants to exercise His authority in your life. See if in this next week your heart might be willing to desperately seek out His lordship in your life as you come up against obstacles and discouragement.

3. The Bible says to pray without ceasing (1 Thess 5:17) regardless of the circumstances. How hard do you think the woman in this story prayed for help? Since she had nowhere else to turn it's easy to imagine that she was very persistent in her calling upon God for help. Certainly, God allowed these dire circumstances in the woman's life in order to bring her to faith in the Lord Jesus for the forgiveness of her sins. Perhaps the woman was always faithful to pray, even before she became afflicted with the disease. Jairus, too, was a religious man, yet he lost his little daughter to a terrible illness. He knew where to turn when life got out of control. He desperately searched for Jesus, the Son of God and the rightful Lord of the universe. These two individuals are pictures of desperate hearts seeking God's help.

How bad do things have to get before we pray? Regardless of our circumstances**, God has called us not to wait until troubles come our way, but to be faithful and pray in order to obey.** This includes praying not only about our needs but also for the needs of others.

What are some practical ways that we may improve our level of persistence in prayer? Here are some methods that have worked for me, although they may not be suitable for everyone.

1.Write your prayer requests down on a 3×5 card. Carry this with you and as you find time pray throughout the day. It's helpful to categorize your requests, such as "Healing" or "Come to Faith in Jesus."

2.Consider the concept of constructing a kind of "prayer maze" in your head by assigning the people for whom you are praying to a geographical map of where they are located. For example, you could begin with praying for people in your home town, then move on to prayers for those located in the western part of your state, then to the north, east, and so on. This has proven very helpful to me since many times I pray for people during my daily exercise where I would not have access to cards on which I had listed prayer requests.

3.Finally, pray! Ask God to show you ways to improve your prayer life. In a previous edition of Mass Notes we discussed several weeks ago in the section on Luke 16:1-13. The application of this text was that God has called us to use our talents and ingenuity in order to lead people to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Pray and ask God to energize your prayer life through the use of your time, talents, and materials possessions. This includes using our technological devices like smart phones and computers.

Readings for the Week

Note: For a listing of readings for the Roman Catholic Mass visit this web site:

http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/062815.cfm

First Reading WIS 1:13-15; 2:23-24

Second Reading 2 COR 8:7, 9, 13-15

Gospel Reading MK 5:21-43

Source(s):

Online Scripture verses for most Bible versions can be found at: http://www.biblegateway.com/

Scripture quotations taken from the NASB