

## Lectio Divina

### February 19<sup>th</sup> 2023 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time Year A – Matthew 5:38 – 48

<sup>38</sup>You have heard that it was said, “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.” <sup>39</sup>But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; <sup>40</sup>and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; <sup>41</sup>and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. <sup>24</sup>Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you. <sup>43</sup>You have heard that it was said, “You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.” <sup>44</sup>But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, <sup>45</sup>so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. <sup>46</sup>For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax-collectors do the same? <sup>47</sup>And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? <sup>48</sup>Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ <b>Read and re-read</b> – out loud and slowly the Gospel.</li><li>➤ <b>Meditate</b> - on reading as being spoken to you, an experience in your life</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ <b>Pray</b> - Thanksgiving – Repentance – Petition</li><li>➤ <b>Action</b> – Attitude (Call to change / to act /to do</li></ul> |
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In this week’s gospel we are given quite difficult tasks by Jesus. One of the main requests by Jesus is to love your enemies and to pray for those who persecute us. Jesus says it is no good just loving those who love you. If we spend our time deepening our old wounds by holding on to hurts from the past we can become imprisoned and grow cold and bitter. As God does not link his gifts to how we feel about him, how can we as Christians do the same to one another?

#### Prayer:

**Thank you Lord** for the great people of non-violence like Gandhi who said "non-violence is one of the greatest forces at the disposal of people for good.

**Forgive us Lord** for the times we carried in our hearts great anger and bitterness for those who hurt us instead of trying to have the compassion and care which Jesus has for all of us.

**Lord help** us to be like Jesus generous in sharing the gift of love inspired by His father who 'causes the sun to rise on bad people as well as good' and in doing that shows us that he does not give up on any of us.

