

# Sunday, July 10, 2016

## Meditation and Questions for Reflection or Group Discussion

### Mass Readings:

1st Reading: Deuteronomy 30:10-14

Responsorial: Psalm 69:14, 17, 30-31, 33-34, 36-37

2nd Reading: Colossians 1:15-20

Gospel: Luke 10:25-37

### Loving God & Loving Your Neighbor as Yourself, *The Heart of the Gospel Message*

*You shall love . . . your neighbor as yourself.* (Luke 10:27)

Think about the last time you or someone you take care of caught the flu. You probably stopped the normal course of daily life in order to deal with the illness. Now think about the Samaritan in this well-known parable. He was no less busy than the priest or the Levite who had passed by the wounded man in the street. He wasn't just wandering along the road; he was going about business.

The Samaritan's business, though, wasn't the most important thing to him. No, more important was his willingness to look at the beaten man and suffer with him—not physically, but in his heart and thoughts. Compassion welled up in him and took precedence over his plans. And so, a man's life was saved.

No matter who we are or where we live, we all face the same question: "Is the normal course of my day more important than the suffering I see around me?" You don't have to go looking high and low for it; you will come across it as you go about your everyday life. Perhaps someone you meet has been robbed of confidence or joy. Maybe someone seems beaten and overwhelmed by financial challenges or marital troubles. Maybe someone is living as one left for dead, lonely and alone. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you see these people as he does, to hear what they aren't saying, and to have the compassion to stop and be a "neighbor."

When you stop to take care of someone, to suffer with them, you are doing far more than offering human kindness. You are becoming a vessel for Christ. He is ministering at that very moment—to both of you!

Repeatedly in the Gospels, we read, "Jesus had compassion"—because people were harassed, helpless, sick, blind, or anxious. The reason didn't matter; their suffering moved him, and he acted. Now he is telling all of us, "Go and do likewise" (Luke 10:37).

*"Holy Spirit, open my eyes to the hurting people around me. Make room in my heart for compassion to overflow."*

(Many thanks to *The Word Among Us* ([www.wau.org](http://www.wau.org)) for allowing us to use meditations from their monthly devotional magazine. Used with permission.)

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***Questions for Reflection or Discussion***

1. In the first reading, Moses tells the people the command they are to fulfill is already “something very near to you, already in your mouths and in your hearts; you have only to carry it out.” Jesus summarizes this command for us in the Gospel reading: “You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.”
  - How would you characterize how you are fulfilling this command?
  - What small step may God be asking you to take to better love Him and your neighbors?
2. The responsorial psalm is a prayer and cry for help by the psalmist who is “afflicted and in pain.”
  - Why do you think the psalmist is he able to respond to this affliction and pain with these words: “I will praise the name of the Lord in song, and I will glorify him with thanksgiving?”
3. The second reading from the letter to the Colossians, St. Paul’s ancient hymn, describes Jesus with these words: “Christ Jesus is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation” and “For in him all the fullness was pleased to dwell.”
  - In what ways do these words give us a glimpse into Jesus Christ as the 2<sup>nd</sup> person of the Trinity?
4. We are further told, regarding Jesus, in the second reading that “For in him all the fullness was pleased to dwell and through him to reconcile all things for him, making peace by the blood of his cross through him, whether those on earth or those in heaven.”
  - In what ways have you experienced the truth of these words in your life?
  - What areas of your life may still require a deeper reconciliation with God or with your neighbor?
5. In the Gospel reading, in response to the man who wanted “to justify himself,” Jesus tells the beautiful story of the Good Samaritan.
  - Which of the characters in the parable do you relate to the most? Why?
6. The Good Samaritan is often taken as a model of Jesus’ care for each one of us.
  - With this in mind, how do you relate the care to the man who was victimized with how Jesus has cared for you?
7. The meditation ends with these words: “Repeatedly in the Gospels, we read, ‘Jesus had compassion’—because people were harassed, helpless, sick, blind, or anxious. The reason didn’t matter; their suffering moved him, and he acted. Now he is telling all of us, ‘Go and do likewise’ (Luke 10:37).”
  - What do Jesus words, “Go and do likewise” mean to you when it comes to answering his call to love God and neighbor?
8. Take some time now to pray and ask the Holy Spirit for the grace and power to live out the truths of the Gospel, especially to love our neighbor as Jesus has loved us -- and to see the needs of others with Jesus’ eyes and his compassion. Use the prayer below from the end of the meditation as a starting point.

***“Holy Spirit, open my eyes to the hurting people around me. Make room in my heart for compassion to overflow.”***

[The discussion questions were created by Maurice Blumberg, a director of partner relations for **The Word Among Us Partners**, (<http://www.waupartners.org/>); a ministry of **The Word Among Us** ([www.wau.org](http://www.wau.org)) to the military, prisoners, women with crisis pregnancies or who have had abortions, and college students. He is also a member of the National Service Committee Council of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Maurice was also the founding Executive Director of the **National Fellowship of Catholic Men**, for which he is currently a Trustee (<http://www.nfcmusa.org/>). He can be contacted at [mblumberg@wau.org](mailto:mblumberg@wau.org) or [mblumberg@aol.com](mailto:mblumberg@aol.com).]