

LOOKING AT LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GOSPEL



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FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

5th July 2026

Matt. 11:25 At that time Jesus said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; ²⁶ yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. ²⁷ All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

Matt. 11:28 “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Jesus was very aware that faith in God should be a life giving force for those who believe, but he was equally aware that religion can be a force that oppresses people. Some of his contemporaries claimed that observance of the 613 commandments of the law was the way to life and they called it taking upon oneself the ‘yoke of the kingdom of God’. These people, the scribes and the pharisees, were opposed to much of what Jesus was doing but at the same time many others heard him gladly. These were people who were forced out by a system that could only condemn them as sinners. Now in these verses, Jesus utters a beautiful prayer of thanksgiving to God for what is taking place: those in most need of the good news are coming to know God’s love for them. In inviting the weary and overburdened to come to him he offers them a yoke not of more and more rules, but of a relationship, in which the gentle and humble love of the Saviour allows them to find their dignity as children of God.

SEAN GOAN - Let the Reader Understand

POINTERS FOR PRAYER

1. For Jesus the key to a personal knowledge of God and relationship with God is not primarily through academic study but through a mind and heart open to learn. Recall moments when you had a sense that your relationship with God took a significant step forward. What kind of dispositions prepared you for that growth?
2. Jesus was dealing with a society in which people were very conscious of status, dignity and external appearances. He wanted to break down the barriers this created so that all would be aware of their worth and dignity. Perhaps you can recall someone who was not highly thought of in human terms, but who was a light to you.
3. In v.27 Jesus lets us into the secret of his relationship with his Father, one of total trust. This trust freed him from anxiety and worry about himself. As a result, he was a person of gentle and humble heart and was able to bring rest to those who were overburdened. Recall people whose trust in God enabled them to be supportive to others who were stressed or burdened. Perhaps you have experienced this yourself?
4. Recall and give thanks for people who, like Jesus in the story, were able to combine challenge with sympathetic support and understanding. Perhaps you have been able to do this for others at times also.

JOHN BYRNE OSA - Intercom

Like all bible passages, this one teaches by way of story. It records a moment of intense emotion in the life of Jesus, when he “exclaims” i.e. utters a heartfelt prayer of thanksgiving.

The experience was particular to Jesus but as always with lectio divina we are invited to enter into it, recognizing with gratitude that we and great people who have touched our lives have lived similar moments. They have been “wisdom moments”, i.e. taught us some important lessons about human living.

Jesus reflects on three aspects of his life:

- a) verses 25 and 26: the learned and the clever did not understand him but “mere children” did;
- b) verse 27: his relationship with his heavenly father;
- c) verses 28 to 30: his ministry to those who are overburdened by the religion of his time.

We read the passage as one continuous flow, interpreting each section in the light of the other two.

In the time of Jesus (as in our time) religion had become a matter of keeping commandments; people experienced it as “labour”; they felt “overburdened” by it. Jesus changed that; he made religion an experience of freedom. He challenged his followers to reach beyond their narrow concerns, but they experienced this “yoke” as “easy” and this “burden” as “light”. We celebrate people who did that for us.

Prayer Reflection

Lord, we pray that our Church may be a presence of Jesus in our country:

- always on the lookout for those who are looked down upon as mere children;
- grateful when you reveal things to them that have been hidden from the learned and the clever;
- and proclaiming your love to the world.

Lord, we thank you for moments of intimacy and sharing,

when friends opened themselves to us in trust,
letting us know them as no one knew them,
and we felt known as we had never been known,
and there was no worry about our trust being betrayed.

These were truly sacred moments when we experienced your love and your trust.

MICHEL DE VERTEUIL - Lectio Divina on the Sunday Gospels

At the end of his prayer in this passage, Jesus continues thinking of the simple folk and he makes them three offers.

The first offer “*come to me all you who are burdened*”. It is directed to all who see religion as a burden, those who are burdened by doctrines that prevent them from experiencing the joy of salvation. If they come into vital contact with Jesus they will find immediate solace: *‘I will give you rest’*.

The second offer; “*Take my yoke upon you .. for my yoke is bearable and my burden light*”. Change your burden. Cast off that of the wise and prudent because it is not bearable, and take on the yoke of Jesus, which makes life more bearable. Not because Jesus exacts less. He exacts more, but in a different way. He exacts what is essential: the love that frees us from what does us harm.

The third offer: *‘Learn from me because I am meek and humble of heart.’* Learn to fulfil the demands of the Law and religion by understanding them in the spirit of Jesus. Jesus does not complicate life. He makes it more simple and humble. He does not oppress, but frees us to live it in a more dignified and human manner. To meet Jesus is to find rest,

JOSÉ A PAGOLA - Walking in the Footsteps of Jesus

In today’s text Jesus puts ‘infants’ centre stage as the ones who are great examples of humility and wisdom. The challenge for each of us today is to rekindle a childlike sense of awe and wonder for our world, not to let our hearts become hardened like those of the ‘wise’ in the Gospel.

For Jesus, God’s grace is found in the humble, in those who are open to new possibilities, in those whose hearts are open. We are invited to grow in awareness by seeing through the eyes of a child, rather than through the eyes of those who claim to have all the answers.

Reclaim wonder this week: spend time in nature, be creative through writing, dance to your favourite music, bake something, laugh, be curious each day about something, paint (not the walls), sing, play a game, practice gratitude. Notice what happens in you as you tap into your creative energy and wonder. Write about your experience.

TRÍONA DOHERTY & JANE MELLETT - Go Deeper

Thought for the day

The Lord understands us and knows us better than we know ourselves. O Lord, you have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away. You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. (Psa 139:1–3) He knows of what we are made and so we can come confidently before him with our brokenness and need of his grace. It might be good during Mass today to become aware of whatever is a burden to me now in my life and ask the Lord for his love and healing touch.

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