

Sunday Reflection

- ◆ **First Reading:** *Exodus 34:4b-6, 8-9*
- ◆ **Second Reading:** *2 Cor 13: 11-13*
- ◆ **Gospel:** *John 3:16-18*

No doubt the words “...I CAN’T BREATHE..” will resonate with all of us for a long time ; these were the last words of afro-american George Floyd on Monday, 24th May, Minneapolis, Minnesota ; a white police officer had suffocated him to death ; we all saw it, the officer had forced his knee onto the neck of his victim, blocking airflow, what a horrible sight!!, and even more so with three other officers looking on and doing nothing. Afterwards in less than 12 hours the U.S. exploded into violence and uproar. The anger is more than justified and long overdue, not the looting nor destruction of property. Spike Lee, the acclaimed American film director commented “...black slave labour is one of the principal foundations on which the United States was built, this is nothing to be proud of.”

The message of the protesters, black, white, ethnic minorities alike was “enough is enough! Stop killing us, stop leaving us with nothing to live for”

What would your stance be on this entire heart breaking scenario??

What would you speak out against? Justice for the oppressed in a land of plenty? Equal opportunity for all? Equal rights for all citizens? ; no doubt you’d be in favour of a new overhaul of policing practice, as in, no more “neck locks” or how about to examine more thoroughly the abuse of power?. In the above mentioned incident the abuse of power was blatant, even scary to watch ; if your children were watching the last moments of George Floyd(on the news), did you have to explain to them what was happening?, how did you put it to them? “...that’s a white police officer suffocating a black man..”, “..and WHY is he doing that mammy..?”, no doubt you had your answer.

2. Now a lot has to be discussed, analysed, changed, healed and a lot more. High on the agenda is of course THE ABUSE OF POWER!!, this is a vast unpleasant subject ; what is it in the human psyche that makes a person want to abuse another?, we may look at the George Floyd case and say “OH!, SUCH ABUSE”!! , and yet here in the U.K. abuse is going on all around us, here are only three examples; whenever I see six or seven poorly clad young men washing a car at a petrol station, I say to myself “someone is making quick money on the efforts of those workers, they are being exploited”

The verbal and physical abuse that a lot of homeless people have to endure is a disgrace, here we have the abuse of the poorest of the poor or how about the abuse of innocent human life in the womb? that’s our abortion industry!, at on average 600 every working day, yes! an industry in itself, this is the abuse and killing of innocent unborn babies, weren’t we all babies in our mother’s womb? Of course the abortion people will justify the “work” of their industry using their own very coercive language.

Indeed there are many more examples on the abuse of power, sniff it out in your own environment, you may even have to deal with it at home “why does my husband like to make little of me as though I’m worthless?”, or who’s the bully where you work?, “why can’t my boss treat me more respectfully?”

Jesus Our Lord was no stranger to the abuse of power, his own people had to live under a cruel regime, roman imperialism had no mercy “pay your taxes to Caesar or else...” ; Jesus was abused by the soldiers, they played dice for his outer garment, they spat on him, and nailed him to a cross. So don’t come along an’ say “God is so far removed from all the present pain in the world”, nothing could be further from the truth!

3. What can we reflect on for Trinity Sunday and all that has happened during the last two weeks? Do you and I abuse another person or group in our thoughts, words and actions?, even to wish misfortune or ill health on a fellow human being needs to be examined, try an examination of conscience!!

Where the breaking down of barriers is concerned Jesus set a great example, look up the Cure of the Leper, Mark 1 ; 40, **...FEELING SORRY FOR THE LEPER, JESUS STRETCHED OUT HIS HAND AND TOUCHED HIM, "OF COURSE I WANT TO CURE YOU", he said "BE CURED".....**At that time people with leprosy were outcasts, and to actually touch a leper was a "social sin", but Jesus broke thru' that barrier out of compassion for a fellow suffering human being ;

Also Jesus left us with a few simple words on how we should treat one another as fellow human beings **SO ALWAYS TREAT OTHERS AS YOU WOULD LIKE THEM TO TREAT YOU ; THIS IS THE MEANING OF THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS**

With these words, Jesus the Saviour instructed against all forms of abuse, class distinction, snobbery and viciousness towards those "who are not my kind"!!! ; so here we are over 2000 years later, and the message is still not getting thru', will we ever learn and put this into practice?? **ONLY WHEN YOU AND I DECIDE TO PUT IT INTO PRACTICE**, and then our corner of the world becomes a better place, and a half-hearted effort is no effort at all

"LORD, MAKE ME AN INSTRUMENT OF YOUR PEACE"....say it a few times during this Sunday(...and why not every day?.....), also spare a thought and a prayer for the family and loved ones of George Floyd+

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