

Lectionary
Readings for every day
You Select!



in the HCUC

No. 12

For 9 August 2015

Dear Friends

*Some day, after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity,
we shall harness for God the energies of love, and then, for a second time in the history
of the world, humankind will have discovered fire.*

These are words by a remarkable man who was a scientist with an international reputation in the area of palaeontology (fossils, rocks and the history of the earth). He was a Jesuit priest (but was forbidden by his church to publish any of his writings while he was alive). He was also a profoundly spiritual being whose insights were deep and full of humble reverence and love for God and every aspect of life. He died in 1955. I feel moved to take his phrase ‘the energies of love’ and do my best to expand it—just a little!

The first thing that comes to mind is that at the heart of the Christian religion is the theme of LOVE. Can any teaching be more positive, life affirming, beautiful, reassuring and unchanging than this one:- **Beloved: let us love one another, for love is of God, and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love has not recognised God. For God is love.** (1 John 4:7-8)

For many of us these words can be so familiar they roll off our tongue without even a flicker of life, or through our mind without sparking any flame of enlightenment or excitement. Yet for all our dullness or shallow awareness, we all, everyone, no matter what nationality, race or colour, in all the ages of our human history, Yes everyone, longs to be loved and to be able to love. It is confirmed by the thousands of songs that have some aspect of love in the title. Or the novels, films, TV series that have some shade of love at the core of their story. We are made for loving. We know this by the fact that we thrive in the presence of love. Love is health-giving, healing. It is the essential in holding us together with trust in relationships—in marriages, in families, and in communities.

Albert Einstein, the scientist, gave us a short simple equation as a way of seeing the universe—even if we don’t understand it scientifically. It is $E = MC^2$. It has ben rumoured that he did consider at some point writing the equation as $L = MC^2$, namely, indicating that he saw the E for Energy could also be written as L for Love. I’m sure the scientist (at the top of this page, ie. “Teilhard de Jardin) would agree. And I’m sure God would be happy too.

Sincerely - Lester

	Psalm	Epistle/OT	Gospel
Monday 10 August:	147:13-end	Deut 10:12-end	Matt 17:22-end
Tuesday 11 August:	107:1-3, 42-end	Deut 31:1-8	Matt 18:1-5, 10,12-14
Wednesday 12 August:	66:14-end	Deut 34	Matt 18:15-20
Thursday 13 August:	114	Josh 3:7-11,13-17	Matt 18:21-19:1
Friday 14 August:	136:1-3, 16-22	Josh 24:1-13	Matt 19:3-12
Saturday 15 August:	45:10-end	Isa 61:10-11	Luke 1:46-55
Sunday 16 August <u>Pentecost 12</u>			
Ps 111; 1 Kings 2:10-12,3:3-14; Eph 5:15-20; John 6:51-58			

	Psalm	Epistle/OT	Gospel
Monday 17 August:	106:34-42	Judg 2:11-19	Matt 19:16-22
Tuesday 18 August:	85:8-end	Judg 6:11-24	Matt 19:23-end
Wednesday 19 August:	21:1-6	Judg 9:6-15	Matt 20:1-16
Thursday 20 August:	40:4-11	Judg 11:29-end	Matt 22:1-14
Friday 21 August:	146	Ruth 1:1,3-6, 14-16,22	Matt 22:34-40
Saturday 22 August:	146	Ruth 2:1-3,8-11; 4:13-17	Matt 23:1-12
Sunday 23 August <u>Pentecost 13</u>			
Ps 84; 1 Kings 8:(1,6,10,11),22-30,41-43; Eph 6:10-20; John 6:56-69			

	Psalm	Epistle/OT	Gospel
Monday 24 August:	145:1-7	Isa 43:8-13	Luke 22:24-30
Tuesday 25 August:	139:1-9	1 Thess 2:1-8	Matt 23:23-26
Wednesday 26 August:	126	1 Thess 2:9-13	Matt 23:27-32
Thursday 27 August:	90:13-end	1 Thess 3:7-end	Matt 24:42-end
Friday 28 August:	97	1 Thess 4:1-8	Matt 25:1-13
Saturday 29 August:	98:1-2, 8-end	1 Thess 4:9-12	Matt 25:14-30
Sunday 30 August <u>Pentecost 14</u>			
Ps 45:1-2,6-9; Song Sol 2:8-13; James 1:17-27; Mark 7:1-8,14-15,21-23			

MOMENTS OF LOVE—TO LIVING A LIFE OF LOVE

For many people the most memorable sacred moments have some opening to love or encounter with love. It can happen during quiet reflection, offering some from-the-heart kindness, giving or receiving forgiveness, reading a poem, singing a hymn or song, hugging someone who is grieving, laughing with a child, while listening with care to the story of a friend, being suddenly overwhelmed by the awesomeness of nature, or the sheer wonder of the world.

Have you noticed that the experience of these healing moments often happen unexpectedly during times of pain, self-doubt, grief, or uncertainty.

There is such a moment in the life of Oscar Wilde the writer who was shamed, reviled, pilloried and jailed for his sexuality. He tells it in his book *De Profundis* (Out of the Depths). He was being taken from his prison cell to the Bankruptcy court, between two policemen. On this journey to a fresh round of humiliation he saw a friend of his (he doesn't name him).

He writes that his friend “... waited in the long dreary corridor that ... he might gravely raise his hat to me, as, handcuffed and with bowed head, I passed him by. Mem have gone to heaven for smaller things than that. It was in this spirit, and this mode of love, that the saints knelt down to wash the feet of the poor or stooped to kiss the leper on the cheek. When wisdom has been profitless to me, philosophy barren, and the proverbs and phrases of those who have sought to give me consolation, are dust and ashes in my mouth, the memory of that little, lovely, silent act of love has unsealed for me all the wells of pity; brought me out of the bitterness of lonely exile into harmony with the wounded, broken, and the great heart of the world.”

Stephanie Dowrick (a NZ born writer) who quotes O Wilde in her book “Seeking the Sacred” — reflects on the event and says that in our own lives “little, lovely, silent acts of love” are again and again life-giving, even transforming. To restate the heart of this theme—and the core of the Judeo-Christian tradition we might like to carry in our consciousness the simple equation:- God = Love, (even risking the contradiction of some theologians and write it as Love = God).

The underlying power that creates and sustains life in the universe we can call “the energy of love”. Or as Teilhard de Jardin expresses it—it will be discovering that ‘the energies of love are fire.’

TIME TO WONDER—AND REFLECT

The deeply perceptive spiritual leader St Paul speaks of love as outlasting faith and hope.

When all else has collapsed or crumbled love still remains. When love is embodied in human action it takes this shape, and texture, and beauty.

Love is patient
Love is kind and envies no-one.
Love is never boastful,
conceited nor rude’
Never selfish, not quick to
take offence.

Love keeps no score of wrong,
Does not gloat over people’s sins,
But delights in the truth.

There is nothing love cannot face;
there is no limit to its faith, its hope
and its endurance.

Love will never come to an end.
In a word there are three things that
last forever—faith, hope and love;
but the greatest of them all is LOVE.

The poet Rumi sings of the unbiased, spacious, infinite nature of love.

Define me, shrink me; you starve
your (tiny) self of your true Self.
Keep me nailed in a box of
unyielding words, that box
becomes your coffin.
I do not know who I am.
I live in brilliant astonishment.
I am not a Christian,
a Jew, a Muslim.
I don’t belong to land, or to
known or unknown seas.
I am not to be claimed by nature or
by heaven.
Not by India, China or Bulgaria.
No place is my birthplace ... You
say that you can see my mouth,
ears, eyes, and nose?
They are not mine.
I am the life of life.
I am that cat and this stone.
I am no one.
I have discarded duality life
a worn cloth.
I see and know all times and
universes as one eternally one.
What must I do to get you to know
who is speaking?
Know this—and change everything!
This!
Your voice resounding
on the walls of God.

To ponder:- Sit comfortably—be still and silent.
Breathe calmly—slowly—fully in and out.

- Use the ‘Love’ or a phrase like ‘God is Love’, ‘I am Love’ — let it linger. See where it takes you.
- Find some situation(s) in the week in which you can offer (or might receive) some ‘little, lovely, silent act of love’.