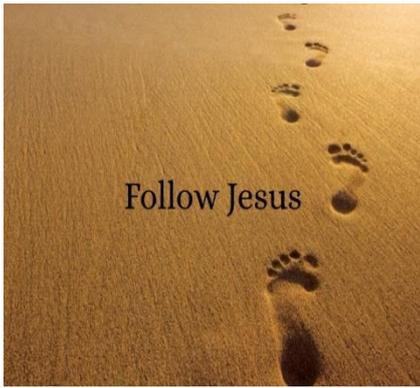


Reflection and Prayers for 22nd Sunday Ordinary Time



Fr Denis Stanley

In church when I was growing up, just after the parish priest had said, 'Go, the Mass is ended', we all knew that our time in church had not ended, because then he would immediately say, 'Ten Hail Marys for vocations'. Everyone would have to kneel down and pray the Hail Marys before we could leave. I always felt it was unfair of him to keep us in church, especially we children who couldn't wait to escape and get outside!

Despite that unpromising start, in God's own time and winding way, those prayers were answered in me as I later made the journey into the priesthood; even more so now that I am Rector of Corpus Christi College, the Provincial Seminary.

I hope you detect an element of mystery here. How all our lives unfold is a mystery—sometimes joyful, sometimes glorious and sometimes sorrowful. By mystery, of course, I do not mean simply uncertain, confusing or dark, but rather something to be wondered at, humbly grateful for and happy that God sets before us a vision to follow, discern and commit ourselves to. And even when the mystery of our lives does make us uncertain and confused and the way is dark, the call to offer our lives in some way for love of God and neighbour is not a senseless trial, a whim or a fancy, but a conviction that keeps us trusting that God does have a purpose for us.

So there is some drama in the mystery of God's call to each of us. There is the struggle of choosing, of hesitation, of letting go, of risk, of being encouraged and of trusting. Then there is the peace of finding a path to follow and knowing that God has gifted me and wants me to use those gifts.

Dear Parishioners, Jesus summons us to find life through the way of the cross. Let us pray with selfless love for all in need.

We pray on this Social Justice Sunday for all whose mental health is under stress, that they may receive the support they need to live life to the full. **Pray in silence**

We pray for prophets such as Jeremiah who speak unwelcome truths that they will never cease to call us to lives of justice and integrity. **Pray in silence**

We pray for ourselves as the people of Australia, that the COVID pandemic will spur us to work together for a society in which all can flourish. **Pray in silence**

We pray for the recently deceased and for those whose anniversary of death occurs around this time that they will rejoice in the glory of God forever. **Pray in silence**

Holy God, we hunger and thirst for you. Nourish us always with the living Word who is your Son and our saving Lord, for ever and ever. Amen