



Year C Luke 10:25-37

25 There was a lawyer who, to disconcert Jesus, stood up and said to him, ‘Master, what must I do to inherit eternal life? **26** He said to him, ‘What is written in the law? What do you read there?’ **27** He replied, ‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself.’ **28** ‘You have answered right,’ said Jesus, ‘do this and life is yours.’ **29** But the man was anxious to justify himself and said to Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbour?’ **30** Jesus replied, ‘A man was once on his way down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of brigands; they took all he had, beat him and then made off, leaving him half dead. **31** Now a priest happened to be travelling down the same road, but when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. **32** In the same way a Levite who came to the place saw him, and passed by on the other side. **33** But a Samaritan traveller who came upon him was moved with compassion when he saw him. **34** He went up and bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them. He then lifted him on to his own mount carried him to the inn and looked after him. **35** Next day, he took out two denarii and handed them to the innkeeper, “Look after him,” he said, “and on my way back I will make good any extra expense you have.” **36** Which of these three, do you think, proved himself a neighbour to the man who fell into the brigands’ hands?’ **37** ‘The one who took pity on him’, he replied. Jesus said to him, ‘Go and do the same yourself.’

Other readings: Deuteronomy 30:10-14 Psalm 68 (69) Colossians 1:15-20

One of the extraordinary features of the Gospel according to Luke is the presence of parables of Jesus only found in this gospel. The parable of the Good Samaritan is one of these. The parable is provoked by the question of the ‘lawyer’, an expert in the Jewish Law. The summary of the Law that he offers Jesus is the same as the reply Jesus himself gives in other gospels. There is a profound agreement between Jesus and the experts on the Law.

To the lawyer’s further question, ‘And who is my neighbour?’, Jesus replies not by entering into a dialogue about who and who is not a neighbour. For Jesus all people are to be treated as neighbours. Instead, Jesus tells a parable to illustrate how to behave as a neighbour to others. The painstaking compassion of the Samaritan for an unknown victim of violence in a hostile environment provides an example for all followers of Jesus.

In this story Jesus sets up as an example a Samaritan, one who belongs to a despised and hated race, considered heretical by the Jews, and contrasts him with two heartless religious professionals. The Samaritan, with his Christ-like behaviour, challenges every Christian.

Am I willing to learn from the example of those who are despised?

What do the words ‘Go and do the same yourself’ ask of me today?

Pray for those involved in bringing assistance to the victims of violence, terrorism and war.

Pray for harmony among people of different religious beliefs.

