

## Homily For Tuesday of the 14th Week of Ordinary Time- Year II

### St Peter's 8:30am Mass - July 7, 2020

**Hosea 8:4-7,8-11** "With their silver and gold they made idols for their own destruction."

**Psalm 115:3-10** "Those who make idols, and all who trust in them, will come to be like them."

**Matt. 9:32-38** "When the demon had been cast out, the one who had been mute spoke."

### Trust in God Alone

#### Introduction

Dante is the great 14th century poet who begins his master work, the Divine Comedy, with a tour of hell. He must go down first before he can ascend to the heavenly realm, because he has to become awakened to the true horror of sin, to be 'scared straight'. The sign over the gate to hell reads: "Abandon all hope, you who enter here." As he witnesses the horrible existence of the damned, his guide tells him that this is the place for "those who have lost the good of intellect."

The human power of reason, of understand, which they had, they have become unable to use. It terrifies Dante to be there but his guide has to keep reminding him that he is not one of them, because he is still aware of the salvation being offered to him.

#### Psalm

I suggest that this particular psalm passage is well worth our spending much time in prayerful reflection. It compares the false objects of worship with God.

"Our God does whatever he pleases." There is no limit to what God can do because he is the one who sets the limits of nature. The gods Israel had gradually come to depend on were made out of the most precious things in the natural world, out of silver and gold, but useless to save them from damnation.

As I go through the list, you might think of some ways we have created gods without power to save us, but only lead us to destruction.

They have mouths but do not speak: Money talks but it tells us nothing about love and compassion. Money as an idol promotes greed and self interest.

They have eyes but do not see: We have the expression 'blind rage'. How many today are enraged but acting out at the wrong thing?

They have ears, but do not hear: As family values are ignored or shouted down, the voice of God becomes almost impossible to hear.

They have hands but do not feel and they have feet but do not walk. In the world, it is not fashionable to consider corona virus a chastisement, a call back to God. Yet we have had taken away from us the value of touch, by which Jesus often healed.

They have feet but do not walk. During lockdown, we were forcibly kept in our homes. We can't even care for sick loved ones. But Jesus went to the towns and villages, healing the sick.

Finally, the psalmist repeats a key element of the idols. They make no sound in their throats.

But Jesus went to towns and villages proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God.

The psalmist makes two declarations: The ones who make those idols will become like them AND, so will those who trust in them.

## **Hosea**

Hosea warned Israel about turning to idols of silver and gold, leading them to their own destruction.

- He says they have lost their innocence. How like our time when we expose our own precious children to violence and sexuality during their God made time of innocence.
- They have ignored the law God gave them, the ten commandments of love for God and neighbour.

The prophets are hard to hear. They sound so negative, but this is about a God of love, telling us that we are on a destructive path and inviting us to return to him, the true God. If God is not first, then nothing is in its right place.

### **Matthew**

At the sight of the crowd, Jesus had compassion because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. This is the true purpose of sight, to see where are the needs of others. Idols cannot do this.

When the demon had been cast out by Jesus, the one who had been mute spoke. The demon keeps the man from being able to speak. But Jesus, the Word of God, went about proclaiming the good news of the kingdom. When he spoke on earth, the good news of the kingdom was proclaimed. And every disease and every sickness was cured.

### **Conclusion/Call to Action**

Today's passages are God's holy Word being spoken to us. They describe the loss of the natural senses to perceive, or understand, the result of sin, of a radical turning from God. It happened to ancient Israel. It happened in Jesus' day. And, it happens in the Church and in the world today.

Let us not be a people who have lost the good of our spiritual senses. While the capacity of our intellects has been darkened by our tendency to make idols, let us instead trust in the Lord. For our help is in the Lord. Let each of us root out our idols and destroy them. While we wear a mask to protect us from physical illness, let our God and saviour be our help and our shield.