

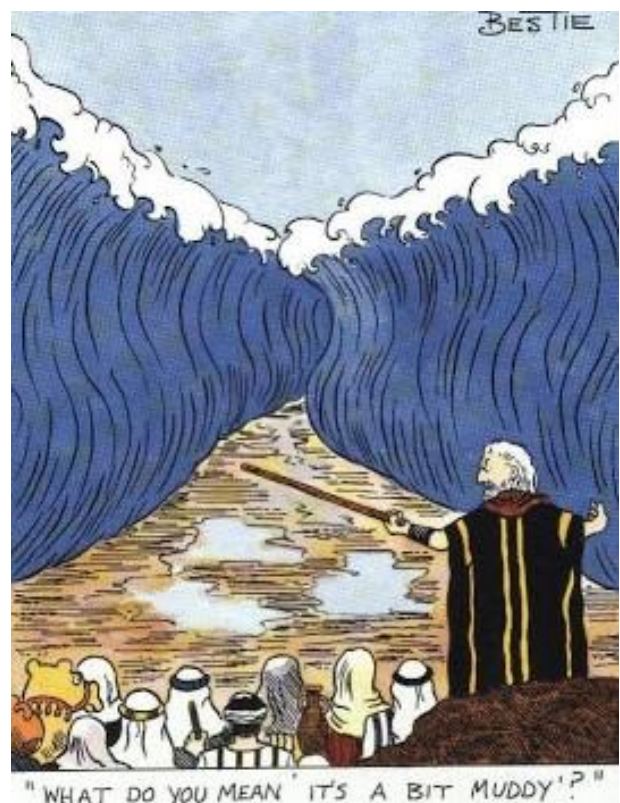
## Monday Week 16 of Ordinary Time

### First reading, Exodus 14:5-18

Sacred Scripture is written by human beings “under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit” (Vatican II; Dei Verbum paragraph 11). Therefore, what we read in the Bible and what we hear at Mass, is God speaking to us. God always exists in the present; the “now” of our lives, (Catechism paragraph 600) and so His words are alive and always relevant. This is why the Bible is always relevant for us, even though some of the texts are three thousand years old. As well as the literal sense of Scripture (the story on the page) because Scripture is written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we can, in the light of the same Spirit perceive deeper and relevant truths applicable for our own time.

Today’s first reading is a case in point. Our modern sensibilities can be upset with the literal sense of Scripture; that God is planning to kill thousands of Egyptians pursuing a group of runaway slaves. Even allowing for the exaggeration of numbers in the retelling, this is still a dramatic story which has come down to us as it is necessary for us know for our salvation. When we read it with the eyes of the spiritual senses, we can see that the text points to Christ. He is the new Moses who leads us out of slavery to sin. In a general sense we can see that Moses prefigures Christ and his words “have no fear” are repeated many times when Jesus tells His disciples not to be afraid (e.g. Mt. 10:31).

At this point in our Covid journey there is a great deal of fear in our society. Covid numbers are rising, although deaths and serious illness, thanks be to God, are not rising in the same way. Instead of today being the long awaited “freedom day”, we are faced with the Red Sea; a seemingly treacherous path forward, and an apparent band of Covid cases hot on our heels! This is where we need to place out trust in Our Lord Jesus Christ. Whatever the situation He will not abandon those who have placed their trust in Him. He will lead us through the murky waters ahead, and “fight on our behalf”. This does not mean that we will be protected from



the virus, but it does mean that whatever happens in the next phase of this Covid journey we are undertaking, we will grow in faith if we trust in Jesus each day. Moses led the people through the Red Sea and over the next 40 years or so, the rabble of slaves became a nation learning to trust God and one another. They learned to worship, were given the Ten Commandments and were finally worthy of crossing into the Promised Land. By trusting in Jesus Christ who, through the Holy Spirit, leads us to His Father, we can enter into this new phase with hope and expectation.

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