

15TH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

Deuteronomy 30: 10-14 Colossians 1: 15-20 Luke 10: 25-37

The lawyer in the Gospel of today wants to go to the bottom of the matter with Jesus. He asks Jesus: ***“Who is my neighbour?”***

- ❖ The question prompts Jesus to tell this well-known parable of the man who fell into the hands of brigands

At the end of the parable Jesus throws back the question to the Lawyer to provide a fitting answer for himself: ***“Which of these three proved himself a neighbour to the man who fell into the brigands hands”***

Someone in the parable (the victim) who was overwhelmingly overlooked.

When a priest going down the same road saw the man, he passed by on the other side.

So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. Luke 10:31-32

- ❖ The victim was overlooked by two religious men who saw his wounded body ... cringed ... lifted up their priestly robes ... and walked away.

To put the story in modern day, it might be something like

- ***A Priest, a Vicar, Pastor, saw the man and passed by on the other side.***

Which means that those passing by weren't the kind perceived as evil men.

- They were well **respected leaders** ... people known for their **wisdom** and their **compassion** by the way they looked and walked around.

If those two honourable men could stand before us now and explain themselves, they could probably sound **pretty convincing**.

They would tell us:

1. that if they touched a corpse according to Jewish law, they would have been excluded from temple duties.
2. that they didn't think they knew how to help someone in that condition.
3. that they knew this could be a trap – as sometimes robbers pretend injury so they could lure people to the side of the road then ambush them.

Whatever their reasons, **the response of these leaders leads** us to this question:

Q: Am I a neighbour to people when others have turned away from them? (Just think about it)

- It's a big temptation to follow the lead of the people around us instead of following the **lead of the Holy Spirit**.
- It's possible that God may call you **to help someone that everyone else has overlooked**.
- You may be chosen by God to be the conduit for His love and help someone **that no one else can or will help**.
- Sometimes **that's why God has you walking on that particular road on that particular day**.
- God may place it on your heart **to help when others won't**.

Jesus is telling the lawyer and us that **we don't need to ask the question, “Who is my neighbour?”**

In Jesus' Kingdom my neighbour is any person you come in contact with. The story of the Good Samaritan cuts us to the quick.

- ❖ Firstly it teaches that laws should not be used to limit goodness
- ❖ Secondly, it forces us to ask what kind of neighbour am I?

Q: Are we like the priest and Levite; too busy to get involved?

- Too clean to get dirty?
- Too preoccupied to alter our schedule?
- Too careful to risk the unknown?

The question is: **What kind of neighbour am I?**