



Fourth Sunday after Pentecost Sunday, July 7th, 2019

“On Giants’ Shoulders The Grace of Change” II & NAIDOC Week



Two weeks ago, we began the journey of “ordinary time” in the weekly rhythm of readings that we refer to as the lectionary – something that most of the mainline Christian churches observe: Catholic, Anglican and Uniting. Much of so-called ordinary time, is focused upon helping Christians deepen their understanding of the faith. Having passed through the majority of the high feasts of the Church – Christmas, Epiphany, Easter Sunday, Pentecost, Ascension and Trinity, we settle down to think deeply. Sometimes, I refer to this deep learning as involving not just “what to think” (the content of the faith), but “how to think”, meaning how to reflect with creativity and imagination, how to rethink faith in changing times, not just repeat it. The theme of the first week – in this long period of “ordinary time”, was called “On Giants’s Shoulders: The Grace of Change”. Then, we concentrated on the Hebrew reading, that concerned the prophet Elijah, the champion of Hebrew identity and tribal politics, the warrior who defended everything Hebrew, against the contending empires: especially the Canaanites. In that reading, we discovered that Elijah was confronted by God, called to think again, to understand that God was not the cultural warrior that Elijah had supposed, but rather the “still small voice”, better translated, “the sound of thin silence”, that demanded new thinking, greater maturity, In effect, God called Elijah to keep up with God’s changing activity, from a tribalistic God to One who had opened up to the world beyond Hebrew identity. Elijah had to travel on God’s shoulders to see further ahead.

Today, we continue this theme of “On Giant’s Shoulders”, “On God’s Shoulders”, as we focus our attention upon the story of Naaman, who discovers that God is again, well-ahead of Naaman’s understanding. We also spend time to acknowledge NAIDOC Week, as we think upon the history and experience of our indigenous brothers and sisters.

GATHERING

Announcements

In Celebration of NAIDOC Week: Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu singing “Wiyathul” at Enmore Theatre Sydney, 2009

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x8-YMpYbRqY>

(NAIDOC stands for **National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee**. Its origins can be traced to the emergence of Aboriginal groups in the 1920's which sought to increase awareness in the wider community of the status and treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians).

The song “Wiyathul” offers an insight into the deep spirituality of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It tells of Djilawurr, the Orange Footed Scrub Fowl, who cries out for his home country, the old man and the mothers who cry out for their sacred places Guwalilna, Warradika and Yumayna. We all have our ‘sacred places’ that we long for, and can develop some empathy for Indigenous people who long for their country. We know of the pain Indigenous people have suffered since European settlement and can all strive to personally bring about reconciliation in the things we say and the way we think and relate to our Indigenous brothers and sisters.

Invitation to Worship

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

The Lord be with you

And also with you

We light the Paschal Candle

We have lit the candle celebrating our journey together as a people of God

So may we journey...together reaching forward to God who is ahead of us.

Hymn: We are Called (David Haas)

Come! live in the light!

Shine with the joy and the love of the Lord!

We are called to be light for the kingdom,
to live in the freedom of the city of God!

Refrain: We are called to act with justice.
 We are called to love tenderly.
 We are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God.

Come! Open your heart!
 Show your mercy to all those in fear!
 We are called to be hope for the hopeless,
 so all hatred and blindness will be no more!

Refrain

Sing! Sing a new song!
 Sing of that great day when all will be one!
 God will reign and we'll walk with each other as sisters
 and brothers united in love!

Refrain

Opening Prayers

This opening prayer is born from the Gospel reading for today, that is about the sending out of the followers of Jesus, with that famous statement that refers to “shaking the dust off the feet” (Luke 10:1-11, 16-20). This metaphor originally referred to the Jewish practice of Jews separating themselves from Gentiles. Christians understood it as referring to their response to those who refused to accept Jesus the Messiah: it meant, “you have made the wrong decision, the wrong choice”. Here, I have re-employed the image of dust, to refer to it as the weight of reality, the burden of living, the cost of our daily lives, as Jesus Christ points us to hope again, in the kingdom.

The Dust that Clings

Dust of a million miles of hurry,
 dust of the wheels of a billion cars,
 dust of the greed and the grasp and the worry,
 dust of the age of unending exhaust,

dust of the pyramids, towers, cathedrals,
 dust of the ploughed and the killing fields,
 dust of the sweat and the blood of the battles,
 dust of the plastics, cosmetics, the pills,

dust of the hungry, dust of the thirsty,
dust of the cruel and the cruelly wronged,
dust of the grieving, the weeping, the weary,
dust of the run and the struggling on,

dust of the questions, dust of the mystery,
dust of the best and worst we've become,
dust of the ash of our anguished history,
dust of mortality's beating drum —

***shake off the grime of it, wrap it in rainbow;
shake off its hurting, heal it in light;
leave only hoping that helps us to let go
of all that would keep us from tasting new life.***

Amen

The Peace

Introduction

LET'S HEAR THE WORD

Some Insights about God in Places that We Seldom Look

While it is, of course, significant to note the power of the God of Israel in the story about Naaman the Aramean general, the political undertones make clear not only the ways in which God works, but the people *through whom* God works. God's wishes for God's people are fulfilled most often not through the dominant brokers of power and privilege, but through the simple wishes of those who such systems marginalize, whether on account of their age, ethnicity, color of their skin, or place of their birth.

**Amy Allen, "Resourceless or Resourceful, 2 Kings 5:1-14",
Political Theology Network**

In the first century of the Common Era, the Roman Peace, or *Pax Romana*, ushered in by the Roman Empire was the promise of peace through the subjugation of lands. In contrast, in the Gospel text for this week Jesus instructs his followers to go from town to town to “share in peace” with whatever household they enter (10:6). What is this peace, then, that Jesus instructs his apostles to proclaim? It is not a peace won on the backs of commoners and soldiers, it is not a peace reserved for the wealthy at the expense of the elite, nor a peace through destruction or death. The peace that Jesus’ apostles bring to each town is a peace for life.

Amy Allen, “The Politics of Bringing Peace—Luke 10:1-11, 16-20 (Amy Allen), Political Theology Network

People see too clearly, to see properly

Maurice Blondel, Nineteenth Century, French Catholic Philosopher, author of “L’Action” (1893)

**2 Kings 5:1-17 (New International Version-NIV) Hazel Ruskin
An account of the Aramean General, Naaman, Healed of Leprosy**

The background to this intriguing story is the history of conflict between Israel and Syria (Aram). The conflictual relationship made it difficult to conduct normal human affairs, especially those involving officials of the two nations. Added to that was the entrenched concept of male ‘honour’ which prevailed in the ancient Middle East (and still prevails). The ‘honour’ system required the implementation of diplomatic ‘face-saving’ techniques in dealing with officials of the other group. The fact that the king of Aram is willing to ask for help from the king of Israel on behalf of Naaman indicates the high regard in which the general is held. He is a mighty warrior through whose courage and foresight Aram has won many victories over neighbouring nations, including Israel. But the most important issue is that a terrible affliction has now incapacitated Naaman. He has what the text refers to as leprosy. The disease is developing, and it limits his capacity as commanding general of the army. It is also viewed with personal dismay by his benefactor, the king of Aram. The solution to Naaman’s problem comes from a highly unlikely source. The Israelite slave girl in Naaman’s household offers what is likely to be the only possible hope for a cure for Naaman. She tells her mistress that there is a prophet in Samaria who could cure the leprosy. The prophet is Elisha, who is the successor of Elijah, the champion of Yahweh and fierce opponent of the worship of other gods, including the gods of Aram. The help comes from a slave, who is also female. She represents a nation which Naaman’s armies have defeated in the past. Therefore, there are several reasons why Naaman will have to overcome his pride in order to go ‘cap in hand’ to ask Elisha to cure his disease.

5 Now Naaman was commander of the army of the king of Aram. He was a great man in the sight of his master and highly regarded,

because through him the LORD had given victory to Aram. He was a valiant soldier, but he had leprosy.^[a]

² Now bands of raiders from Aram had gone out and had taken captive a young girl from Israel, and she served Naaman's wife. ³ She said to her mistress, "If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy."

⁴ Naaman went to his master and told him what the girl from Israel had said. ⁵ "By all means, go," the king of Aram replied. "I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So Naaman left, taking with him ten talents^[b] of silver, six thousand shekels^[c] of gold and ten sets of clothing. ⁶ The letter that he took to the king of Israel read: "With this letter I am sending my servant Naaman to you so that you may cure him of his leprosy."

⁷ As soon as the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his robes and said, "Am I God? Can I kill and bring back to life? Why does this fellow send someone to me to be cured of his leprosy? See how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me!"

⁸ When Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his robes, he sent him this message: "Why have you torn your robes? Have the man come to me and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel."⁹ So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door of Elisha's house. ¹⁰ Elisha sent a messenger to say to him, "Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed."

¹¹ But Naaman went away angry and said, "I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy. ¹² Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Couldn't I wash in them and be cleansed?" So, he turned and went off in a rage.

¹³ Naaman's servants went to him and said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you, 'Wash and be cleansed'!" ¹⁴ So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy.

¹⁵ Then Naaman and all his attendants went back to the man of God. He stood before him and said, “Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel. So please accept a gift from your servant.”

¹⁶ The prophet answered, “As surely as the LORD lives, whom I serve, I will not accept a thing.” And even though Naaman urged him, he refused.

¹⁷ “If you will not,” said Naaman, “please let me, your servant, be given as much earth as a pair of mules can carry, for your servant will never again make burnt offerings and sacrifices to any other god but the LORD.

The word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Psalm 30: A psalm and song for the dedication of the temple.
 Geoff

This prayer of thanksgiving, if you like, gains its very life from the contrasts it sets before us. Images of circumstances engendering loss and grief are replaced by ones which immediately send us to the extreme in delight. The psalm is clearly a suitable companion to the story of Naaman and even to that of Jesus’ disciples as they went from town to town telling the message of Jesus and curing the sick. While the story of Naaman especially speaks of the expectations when one seeks healing – be they to do with false images of power in relation to healing, or with requests which do not really expect anything at all to happen – the psalm itself reminds us of the tremendous excitement and joy in seeing ‘death’ turn into ‘life’ that is in both the Old Testament reading and the Gospel.

¹ I will exalt you, LORD,
 for you lifted me out of the depths
 and did not let my enemies gloat over me.

² ***LORD my God, I called to you for help,
 and you healed me.***

³ You, LORD, brought me up from the realm of the dead;
 you spared me from going down to the pit.

⁴ ***Sing the praises of the LORD, you his faithful people;
 praise his holy name.***

⁵ For his anger lasts only a moment,
 but his favour lasts a lifetime;
 weeping may stay for the night,
 but rejoicing comes in the morning.

**6 When I felt secure, I said,
"I will never be shaken."**

7 LORD, when you favoured me,
you made my royal mountain^[c] stand firm;
but when you hid your face,
I was dismayed.

**8 To you, LORD, I called;
to the Lord I cried for mercy:**

9 "What is gained if I am silenced,
if I go down to the pit?

Will the dust praise you?

Will it proclaim your faithfulness?

**10 Hear, LORD, and be merciful to me;
LORD, be my help."**

11 You turned my wailing into dancing;
you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy,

**12 that my heart may sing your praises and not be silent.
LORD my God, I will praise you forever.**

Galatians 6:10-18 (NIV): Acting and Thinking in New Ways

Only one thing matters for Paul. That is the cross of Christ (6:14). For Paul it represents the major change in his orientation. As a result of its message he ceased to be what he once was, and he changed to become a person living entirely from the generosity (grace) of God. Paul makes this claim in his closing comments in the letter. Notice what precedes and what follows. In 6:11 it looks like Paul has taken up the pen himself from the scribe who was taking his dictation. He draws the Galatians attention to his own large letters (possibly reflecting problems with sight) but then moves straight to the point of the letter: don't let yourselves be bothered by those who want you to be circumcised! They are doing so, he alleges, because it protects them against Jews who would otherwise persecute them (6:12-13). This is an interesting observation. Paul clearly sees more operating here than simply different beliefs. These missionaries, he alleges, are really acting in their own interests. Their fundamentalist stance also has a social explanation - as it often has. So, Paul's enthusiasm and interest lies completely elsewhere. It is neither in self-preservation nor in fundamentalism, but in the gospel of the cross which declares that God's love reaches out to all people without discrimination and seeks to bring them to renewal. New creation is the goal.

10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.¹¹ See what large letters I use as I write to you with my own hand!¹² Those who want to impress people by means of the flesh are trying to compel you to be circumcised. The only reason they do this is to avoid being

persecuted for the cross of Christ. ¹³ Not even those who are circumcised keep the law, yet they want you to be circumcised that they may boast about your circumcision in the flesh. ¹⁴ May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which^[a] the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. ¹⁵ Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is the new creation. ¹⁶ Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule—to the Israel of God. ¹⁷ From now on, let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. ¹⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers and sisters. Amen.

Luke 10:1-11, 16-20 (NIV): Jesus Sends Out the Seventy-Two

David Turner

Luke has already reported the sending out of the 12 in 9:1-6. Now in Luke 10, he is bringing similar material to the fore. Last week we had the passage where Jesus sent messengers ahead of him into a Samaritan town which rejected him (9:52-53). But when we look at the material in 10:1-12, it is not really about preparing people for the visit of Jesus, but rather about the mission of the disciples. Now, the idea of mission is present in our image of the harvest. The idea of gathering in the harvest belongs to the expectation that when God's reign is to begin, there will be a gathering of all God's people for the new beginning. Many will come from east and west and north and south and feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God (Luke 13:28-29; Matt 8:11-12). Sometimes it also included the hope that the Gentiles would also come, like birds coming to make their nests under shrubs of mustard bush. These early Christians saw themselves participating in this great climax of hope. What is interesting here is that this mission of hope was also quite confronting. The challenge was for the people visited, to offer hospitality to these Jesus' followers. The point was that in accepting or rejecting the disciples, people were accepting or rejecting the kingdom, the new deal that Jesus offers on behalf of God. Rejection of divine kindness has consequences.

10 After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. ² He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. ³ Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. ⁴ Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road.

⁵ "When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' ⁶ If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them; if not, it will return to you. ⁷ Stay there, eating and drinking whatever

they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house.

⁸ “When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is offered to you.⁹ Heal the sick who are there and tell them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’ ¹⁰ But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, ¹¹ ‘Even the dust of your town we wipe from our feet as a warning to you. Yet be sure of this: The kingdom of God has come near.’

¹⁶ “Whoever listens to you listens to me; whoever rejects you rejects me; but whoever rejects me rejects him who sent me.”

¹⁷ The seventy-two returned with joy and said, “Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.”

¹⁸ He replied, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹ I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. ²⁰ However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Christ

Some Ideas...about seeing further ahead

Let's Give: Our Offerings

Doxology

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
praise him, all creatures here below,
praise him above, ye heavenly host,
praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.***

EUCCHARIST

**Eucharistic Hymn: Far beyond our mind's grasp (TiS 542,
Caturrog Na Nonoy, Francisco F. Feliciano)**

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you

And also with you

Let us lift up our hearts.

..... ***We lift them to the Lord.***

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

..... ***It is right to give our thanks and praise.***

It is indeed right to give you our thanks and praise, O God,
for your love is forever
and you have raised the crucified Christ from the dead.

You created all things and placed Christ as the cornerstone.
You made your grace known to Israel in the wilderness,
and through your prophets you pledged
your everlasting love and constant faithfulness.

You anointed your child, Jesus,
with the Holy Spirit and power,
and he went about doing good
and healing all who were oppressed by evil.
He was put to death, hung on a tree,
but you raised him on the third day,
and allowed him to appear, first to Mary Magdalene
and then to your other chosen witnesses.
So now we praise you within the gates of justice
and raise our glad songs of victory
for you have become our saviour
and hidden our lives in Christ in glory.

Therefore we join with all the company of heaven in their song

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth
are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.***

***Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest***

Through him, in him and because of him,
We affirm the Church's faith

***Christ has died.
Christ has risen.
Christ will come again.***

Institution

Lord's Prayer

Let us say the Lord's Prayer

***Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.***

***Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.***

***For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.***

하늘에 계신 우리 아버지여
 이름이 거룩히 여김을 받으시오며
 나라이 임하옵시며
 뜻이 하늘에서 이룬 것 같이
 땅에서도 이루어지이다.
 오늘날 우리에게 일용할 양식을 주옵시고
 우리가 우리에게
 죄 지은 자를 사하여 준 것 같이
 우리 죄를 사하여 주옵시고
 우리를 시험에 들게 하지 마옵시고
 다만 악에서 구하옵소서
 대개 나라와 권세와 영광이
 아버지께 영원히 있사옵나이다. 아멘

Breaking of the Bread

Christ is the bread of joy
Who shares food with sinners.

Christ is the cup of life,
Who revives the faint-hearted

Let us receive what we are;
Let us become what we receive.

Agnus Dei

Jesus, Wisdom of God,
have mercy on us

Jesus, Word made flesh,
have mercy on us

Jesus, Liberator of creation
grant us peace.

Communion

Distribution

Bread and wine are distributed among the people

We come forward as a family to partake of the elements together at the Communion Table. The cup on the right-hand side as you face the table is unfermented grape juice and the cup on the left-hand side is alcoholic wine.

Prayer after Communion

God of heaven and earth,
 you make us one in Christ.
 Inspire us with new vision
 becoming a community marked by the freedom
 to think again and to serve.
 Give us strength to walk together
 In Christ's name

Amen

Prayers of the People

Ross Lorenz

The one who prays, after a series of petitions, says, "Raise us Lord" and the people respond, "To be a community of life".

Closing Hymn: Awake from your slumber (Dan Schutte)

**Awake from your slumber, arise from your sleep
 A new day is dawning for all those who weep
 The people in darkness have seen a great light
 The Lord of our longing, has conquered the night**

***Let us build the city of God
 May our tears be turned into dancing
 For the Lord, our light and our love
 Has turned the night into day***

**We are sons of the morning, we are daughters of day
 The one who has loved us, has brightened our way
 The Lord of all kindness has called us to be
 a light for all people to set their hearts free.**

***Let us build the city of God
May our tears be turned into dancing
For the Lord, our light and our love
Has turned the night into day***

**God is light, in him there is no darkness
Let us walk in his light, his children one and all**

**O comfort my people, make gentle your words,
Proclaim to my city, the day of her birth**

***Let us build the city of God
May our tears be turned into dancing
For the Lord, our light and our love
Has turned the night into day***

Blessing and Sending Out

Christ is risen!

Let us celebrate life!

Our service has ended

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

***In the name of Christ
Amen***

**Sung Blessing: We are marching in the light of God (TiS 666,
Siyahamba, South African Traditional, tr, Anders Nyberg)**

Musical Postlude

Pianist:

Rosemary Osborne

