
20 FRIDAYFriday, 7th WEEK of the YEAR

Sirach 6: 5 - 17

Ps 118: 12, 16, 18, 27, 34, 35

Mark 10: 1 - 12

In St Mark's gospel, one striking feature is the amount of healing that Jesus did. And as His reputation spread, people came gathering round Him either perhaps in hope of healing or for curiosity. When crowds gathered, it became Jesus' custom to start teaching. Some of His teaching and the stories He told, we know. But, what was He teaching about when those Pharisees mentioned in today's gospel came along to test Him with "tricky" questions about divorce? Was there some big discussion going on? and why did His own disciples later, in the house, return to the same question yet again: after all, the teaching Jesus gave on the matter seems very clear. But clearly, too, the human relationships of marriage, and all the social, religious, economic and other factors connected with it, ensure that there will always be questions and problems concerning marriage and divorce, in one form or another. Today's scene is no different. Each of us surely knows people caught up in such problems, and the amount of hurt and pain and damage they can cause. In my sincere prayer for those friends and acquaintances, or perhaps even family, may the Lord open my heart to bring to them the healing touch of Jesus. May the lives of all of us who profess to follow Jesus and bring His love to our world somehow bring inspiration and encouragement, comfort and strength where needed. May we be channels of peace, not judgement, of healing rather than 'taking sides' or prolonging the pain. May we teach, not by preaching theory and rules but by making Jesus present to people around us so that He may touch and heal them.

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