

Parish of St. Joseph, Morningside
16th Sunday in Ordinary Time, B

Pulpit Plan

Theme	:	Promises, Promises
1 st Reading	:	Jeremiah 23:1-6
Responsorial Psalm	:	Ps 23
2 nd Reading	:	Ephesians 2:13-18
Gospel	:	Mark 6:30-34

- **"Promises, Promises"** was the second hit single for the British new wave group Naked Eyes in 1983.
- It was a follow up to their earlier hit: "Always Something There to Remind Me"
- The song went on to become a top-20 hit in the USA
- The lyrics go something like this...
 - You made me promises, promises*
 - You knew you'd never keep*
 - Promises, promises*
 - Why do I believe?*
- I do not know about you, but I often find myself singing these words as I reflect on our political leaders!?
- I think that the prophet Jeremiah might have sung them too if he had grown up in the 1980s!
- In the first reading, he speaks God's words to King Zedekiah and the other political leaders who are incapable and corrupt!
- He then continues by proclaiming a future for God's people who have been let down by these leaders who had been meant to look after them!
- God is clearly very angry with these leaders and assures them that he will deal with them for what they have done!
- However, God seems more concerned about caring for the people!
 - He assures them that he will bring the scattered flock back together and make possible a new future for them in which they can prosper!
 - God promises to provide new leaders who will care for his people!
- And as, St. Paul makes very clear in his letter to the Ephesians – God will care for ALL people – even those considered outside!
- God's purpose, as I mentioned last Sunday, is to gather all people together into his kingdom!
- This kingdom is INCLUSIVE of all people not EXCLUSIVE, just for a select, connected powerful few!
 - This is the future the prophet Jeremiah promised!
- This future of an INCLUSIVE home happens not as a result of a change in location or only at the end of the world!
 - No – it comes about as a result of a change in relationships!
 - When 'dividing walls of hostility' are removed and we are at rest in one another's different cultures, gender, languages, beliefs, sexual orientation and political or social affiliations!

- Over these last few days and weeks, we have seen for ourselves, the quality of our political leaders and their selfish concerns, but...
- Fortunately, we do not depend on politicians for this renewal – it is something each and every one of us can – and now more than ever – MUST commit ourselves too!
 - We can open our doors, our hearts to all – especially those outside who may be feeling scattered and lost!
- Whenever we, Catholic Christians, commit to living and making decisions in reference to the Gospel and not in terms of prestige, success, honour for ourselves or our race or tribe, we are living like Jesus –
 - we are being his disciples!
- Disciples bring down barriers and a foster a culture of welcome, love and mutual respect!
 - Are we not seeing this as people, together, begin the “Big Clean Up”?
- Is the prophecy of Jeremiah being fulfilled?
 - Yes, but not in the ways we might expect!
- God goes beyond all expectations.
 - The promised Good Shepherd does not re-establish a kingdom in this world – he transforms hearts!
- We who follow the ways of the Good Shepherd, can depend on his promises!