

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY 16th February 2014
Linda Anshell

Deuteronomy 10:12-22; [Deuteronomy 30:15-20;] Psalm 119:1-8;
1 Corinthians 3:1-9; Matthew 5:21-37; [21-26]

I get the feeling that we are approaching Lent.

Readings about The Law; The Commandments; life...

Jesus, in the gospel keeps saying:

“You have heard it said:

But I say unto you....”

Not only do not commit murder; but don't be angry, don't belittle others....

The whole of the rest of that chapter keeps going on about it..

But Jeannette suggested that we stop reading at verse 26; because verse 27 is the beginning of another paragraph, another idea.

Twenty seven is what is printed in the lectionary. But the prayer book goes to verse 37. So much more sensible. Just makes it a very long reading! A printing error here.

And then Elizabeth really set the cat among the pigeons by pointing out the Deuteronomy reading is different in the lectionary and on the pew sheet. [Sometimes the Australian Anglican lectionary differs from the Common Lectionary.]

And I am “discombobulated”!

No, that word isn't in the dictionary. But I heard it twice this week when talking with Rebecca. She is discombobulated. Eleven or so days in hospital takes its toll. Especially when there are so many possible dreadful explanations of what had happened to take her into the hospital. Rebecca and David certainly need this weekend back at Jamberoo on retreat; and a few days to recover before returning to work after the AGM. (she is still on sick leave then, but wanted to take over from Bishop Trevor who is taking the morning services next Sunday.)

I give you some homework. Read Deuteronomy 30: 5-20. It has within it the plea to CHOOSE LIFE.

Choose life that you may live.

I set before you blessings and curses.

It is *our* choice which way we should take. We should be ACTIVE and DELIBERATE.

But allow me to return to Deuteronomy 10.

The first sentence brings to mind the Micah verse:

What does the Lord require of you

But to do justice;

To love mercy

And to walk humbly with your god.

The Lord executes justice for the widow and orphan and the stranger (sojourner) in the land.

You shall also love the stranger

Why?

Because you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

REMEMBER.

[Forgetfulness leads to exile; remembrance is the secret of redemption.
Said The Rabbi Baal Shem Tov.]

Remember: not many of us here were children born of this land. Children laid in a scrape in the soil, and born again out of the earth.

[As Michael Martin witnessed at Kowanyama on the Gulf]

Mostly in Australia we are either separated from those origins, or exiled from previous lands.

REMEMBER.

Last week Scott finished his sermon...

[“So, friends, the gospel of Jesus Christ carries us beyond the reach of conventional human religiousness and beneath its surface, so that in the company of the shamed and crucified Jesus, beyond the pale of respectability and worldly wisdom, we discover a power from God that lifts our sights and that changes our life from the inside. Today in the Eucharist we pray that by sharing Christ's gift of himself as bread and wine, we may be transformed from the inside to become like Jesus in his death and in his resurrection. Please God, let us be a Church that goes beyond safe, predictable, conventional thinking, and let us not be content until we have become your blessing of salt and light for the world.”]

http://stphilipsoconnor.org.au/sermons/2014feb09_co.php

Please God, let us be a church that goes beyond safe, predictable conventional thinking....

There is a lot in today's pew sheet

The page which is the RAC February Newsletter

Tuesday 25th Feb

1. Refugees: What would Jesus do?

What should we do?

A Public Forum hosted by the Refugee Action Committee, together with the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture.

Canberra church leaders and refugee advocates, including Bishop Stephen Pickard, Rev Myung Hwa Park, Monsignor John Woods, Rev Chris Turner, and Eileen O'Brien, discuss Australia's refugee policy and argue for a different approach.

7:30pm Tuesday 25 February

Venue: The Chapel, Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture, Cnr Kings' Avenue and Blackall Street Barton

I am always surprised at how these meetings inform me and change the way I think.

How will this next meeting at the ACCC change the way we think and act?

"You have heard it said:

But I say unto you...."

Circumcise your heart

Be prepared to be changed.

How do we do that?

By walking humbly with our god.

Seeking god's face...

Psalm 119 (aleph)

¹ Blessed are those whose way is blameless:
who walk in the law of the Lord.

² Blessed are those who keep his commands:
and seek him with their whole heart;

Linda Anchell