

Where is the Lord?

TRINITY 14 – YEAR A – 17TH SEPTEMBER 2017 – SPRINGLINE PARISH
Ezekiel 33. 7-11, Romans 13. 8-14, Matthew 18. 15-20

1.

The Word of God is “living and active, far sharper than a double edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart”. (Heb 4.12)

2.

The first reading from the prophet Ezekiel 33 is a warning to all of us to turn away from our faithless and merely earthly ways. He warns us all: “As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?”

This is the tragedy, the biggest problem the world is facing today:
It is not just the danger looming of an ecological disaster;
It is not the danger of terrorists and their weapons of mass destruction;
It is not the cataclysm predicted by doomsday prophets.

The tragedy of humanity is that we have not turned back to God and repented of our sinful ways and we have not understood nor truly believed that God who *“so loved the world that he gave his own son that anyone who believes in him will have everlasting life”* (John 3.16).

That is why there is, indeed, a real danger that does loom over our world because as also the prophet Jeremiah says, “people generally have forsaken God, the fountain of living water”. We are losing the fulcrum point, the centre of the wheel of life.

3.

The Church as a whole and a parish church fellowship in particular, exists to proclaim God’s presence and power in the world today.

4.

The mission statement of my former parish was “Helping people see that there is a God!” Sounds too generic but it is very relevant as many people have forgotten God in our culture today.

5.

How can we do this as a parish?

People come to know there is a God when they see a Church –

- that loves God, that cares for people, that follows Jesus, that shares the Good News, that builds relationships.

People needs to see a Church that lives its Christian life of following Christ, a Church that is based on selfless service and unconditional giving as part of its Christian character.

As a Church, we must restore God’s sovereign rule in our parish by making God the very centre and fulcrum point in the wheel of our lives.

Many of us are simply groping and grasping, going round and round in a circle of vicious or repetitive habits that take us nowhere.

This is why we must listen to the words of prophet Ezekiel that warns us to turn to God.

5.

Let us stop and take stock of our lives.

What are we doing? Where are we going? What do we want really?

In this equation, where does 'God' fit in?

Is he somewhere out there as one of our many hobbies, spare time activity, or is he, as TS Eliot writes, "*the still centre of a turning world*"?

Only when we put God at the centre, the foundation, the corner stone of our lives, will our lives really have any meaning or any direction. The first commandment still holds absolutely true in our lives today: "*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, all your strength and your neighbour as yourself*"

6.

In the second reading we have heard Saint Paul teaching us the greatest lesson for a Christian. "*One no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.*" (Rom 12. 8)

"Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law" (10)

8.

We all are here this morning because we believe in him, because we love him, and because we trust him as our only Saviour and Lord.

(15) We are here to offer praise to God as we confess again his name as a body, as a fellowship.

(16) We want to do good in his name and to share what we have with others.

9.

Let us pray:

Lord we acknowledge you as the Lord;

We accept you as our Saviour;

We praise you as our God.

Lord we wish to confess your name;

Lord we wish to glorify your name;

Lord we wish to call on your name.

Lord, touch our hearts and our souls.

May we do your holy will in our lives

And regain the glory of living that we have lost.

Amen.

[ST Mattapally]