



15th Week of the Ordinary Time 10/11th July
Reflection/Homily by Mgr Daniel McHugh

The Lord listens to the needy

A most moving story in the media this past week is of Aiden McCarthy, aged 2, who lost both of his parents in the Highland Park Massacre in the United States. He was found under his Dad's body and was heard to say "Are Mom and Dad coming back soon?" The response to the needs of this little boy, who has been placed in the care of his grandparents, is truly amazing: over \$ 2 million has been raised to enable them to look after him. A good deal of the money was given through the "GoFundMe" crowdfunding page. The largest donation was \$ 10 k and over 20,000 contributors have played their part.

Given that the story in the Gospel for the 15th Sunday is of the Good Samaritan, it is a significant story: highlighting as it does the innate **generosity** that is to be found in many people.

The Parable is one of the most famous in the New Testament drawing to attention a number of important matters for us on our Journey of Faith with Our Lord, leading to Eternal Life.

First is that the ideal of the Good Samaritan is Jesus Himself. **His generosity is without limits** and is taken for granted so easily, as is, for example, the love and care of parents and grandparents. It is to be noted that the Holy Father has just completed the World Meeting of Families where the love and care of parents at the heart of the family is so centre stage in Catholic Teaching on the upbringing of children and the future of society in general. This is the place where, above all, we **see love without limit or discrimination** as a key feature of this week's Parable. Interestingly, extending our reflection to grandparents in the handing on of Faith was also key in the World Meeting of Families: we are more conscious in these times of **poverty of Faith** as much as material poverty and the importance in meeting this need: Pope Francis has drawn this to our attention in his Prayer Intention for July: "We pray for the elderly, who represent the roots and memory of people; may their experience and wisdom help young people to look towards the future with hope and responsibility."

A further point to note in the Parable given us by Jesus is that our charity is to extend to people **without distinction or discrimination**: the title we give the Parable focuses on this "The Good Samaritan". Again, we have an image of Jesus Himself, the "Man for Others" as he has been called. Samaritans and Jews were age old enemies: Jesus deliberately teaches about love of neighbour using the story of a Good Samaritan to point out that we are to recognise goodness wherever it is to be found, it should not be limited to certain ethnic or religious groups.

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Finally, the Parable leads to reflect on our **own attitude to those in need**: the priest and the Levite pass by the man who was half dead. It is an inclination we all have; **not to get involved**, not to take the risk of getting engaged. I had a shock personally this past week: I tripped on a kerb stone in a Motorway Service Station and came down heavily, splitting my lip: my first thought as I lay flat on my face was on what might be broken and how I would get up from there. A young man (with wife and child) came to my rescue, picked me up, started to stem the blood as best as he could, using part of the clothing of his child, and helped me into the café area, where the person responsible for medical assistance, came to my aid: the young man didn't think of himself or whether he might get some rare blood disease; he didn't pass by on the other side! I thanked God for that **spontaneous generosity** – it is something we can take for granted in our relationship with God too, our loving Father, in, for example, the Sacraments. He is always giving, reaching out to us in Love; now we must do the same. Thank God for people like the generous people who have crowd funded young Aiden McCarthy, and the young man who picked me up from the pavement.

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