

## Sunday, July 10, 2022 – Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

### Second Reading: Colossians 1:1-14

*Colossae was a city in western Turkey about one hundred miles east of Ephesus. The archaeological site has not been excavated, but two other sites nearby – which are mentioned in Paul's letter to the Colossians – Laodicea and Hierapolis - have been. Laodicea is a major archaeological site and is also one of the cities of Revelation (3:14-22). Revelation 3:16 – Because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I am about to spit you out of my mouth. Hierapolis is famous for its hot mineral springs – Pamukkale (cotton castle).*

*Colossians 4:16 – And when this letter has been read among you, have it read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you read also the letter from Laodicea.*

*The church at Colossae is not a church that Paul started, nor a church that he had even visited. It was founded by Epaphras, who must have been a disciple of Paul and was visiting Paul in prison (4:10,18 – remember my chains), probably to give a report on the serious false teachings that were spreading throughout the church.*

*1:7-8 – This (the grace of God) you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, and he has made known to us your love in the Spirit.*

*2:1 – I want you to know how much I am struggling for you, and for those in Laodicea, and for all who have not seen me face to face.*

*4:12-13 – Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you. He has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis.*

*Very likely Epaphras started those three churches during the two years when Paul was in Ephesus on his third missionary journey.*

*Acts 19:10 – This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia, both Jews and Greeks, heard the word of the Lord.*

*The Second Reading for the next four weeks will come from Paul's letter to the Colossians.*

*July 10 – 1:1-14 – Greetings*

*July 17 – 1:15-28 – Who Jesus is*

*July 24 – 2:6-19 – What Jesus did*

*July 31 – 3:1-11 – Therefore how should I respond – how should I live*

1 - Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother.

2 - Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

3 - In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

4-5 - We have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven.

9 - For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

10 - So that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God.

11-12 - May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father.

13-14 - He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

## **Gospel: Luke 10:25-37**

Jesus' story of the Good Samaritan is one of the most famous stories in all of literature. Jesus told it in response to the question, "Who is my neighbor?" The obvious answer is, Anybody who needs help is your neighbor. That's a lot of people to have as your neighbor.

I suspect that everyone of us feels at least some tinge of guilt whenever we read or hear the story of the Good Samaritan.

### **First lesson in this story – Basic human compassion**

Why Eskimos have no word for the phrase, "Thank you."

Ann Landers – "Be kind to all people. The world needs so much kindness."

Every major world religion and every major secular philosophy would agree.

Mark Twain – "Kindness is the language that even the deaf can hear and even the blind can see."

The risk the Good Samaritan took and the potential expense he took on.

Common courtesy – basic human decency – everyone of us owes our fellow human beings at least that much.

### **Second lesson – Two wounded persons**

The traveler had been wounded physically; the Good Samaritan had been wounded emotionally. But he did not allow the antagonism that he always experienced to make him bitter – especially towards all Jewish people. Instead his own painful experiences made him more empathetic to the plight of a fellow traveler to whom he could reach out and offer help.

I must not allow the hurts and disappointments in my life to make me bitter, callous, or vindictive. Instead I must receive the healing that Jesus gives and then be alert for any wounded fellow traveler on the road of life with whom I could share the gift of healing that I have received from Jesus for my own wounds.

### **Third lesson – We have been the wounded traveler and Jesus has been our Good Samaritan**

Every one of us has acted like the priest and the Levite and chosen not to become involved.

Every one of us, in our better moments, has acted like the Good Samaritan.

But we also have been like the man who was lying – broken, beaten, and bleeding – on the road to Jericho and Jesus has been our Good Samaritan.

At great cost to Himself He reached down to us and fully paid the price to bind up our broken and bleeding hearts and lives.

Compassion fatigue – loving people is not enough, for people can be very difficult to love.

We must be motivated by more than our love for people and our trying to help them be nice.

Why have Christians historically been so charitable and caring?

Because we, too, once were lying beside the Jericho Road, broken and bleeding and beaten up, when some nail-scarred hands reached out to us and ministered to us in our time of need.

Now we are merely doing for others what Jesus has already done for us.

If you do not want to be bothered, any excuse will do.

Remembering what Jesus has done for us will make us want to be bothered.