

First Reading – A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah [Isaiah 55: 6-9]

Seek the Lord /while he may be found, / call him /while he is near. /
Let the scoundrel /forsake his way, / and the wicked his thoughts; /
let him turn to the Lord /for mercy; /to our God, /who is generous in forgiving. /
For my thoughts /are not your thoughts, / nor are your ways my ways, /says the Lord. /
As high as the heavens /are above earth, / so high /are my ways above your ways /
and my thoughts /above your thoughts. /

— **The Word of the Lord. ~ Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm – [Ps 145, 2-3, 8-9, 17-18]

♪ The Lord is near to all who call upon him. ♪

Everyday will I bless you, & I will praise your name forever & ever. ~ Great is the Lord & highly to be praised; his greatness is unsearchable.
The Lord is gracious & merciful, slow to anger & of great kindness. ~ The Lord is good to all & compassionate toward all his works.
The Lord is just in all ways & holy, in all his works. ~ The Lord is near to all who call upon him to all who call upon him in truth.

Second Reading – A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Philippians [Philippians 1: 20c-24, 27a]

Brothers & sisters: /Christ will be magnified in my body, /whether by life or by death. /
For to me life is Christ, / & death is gain. / If I go on living in the flesh, /that means fruitful labor for me. /
And I do not know /which I shall choose. / I am caught between the two. /
I long to depart this life / & be with Christ, /for that is far better. /
Yet /that I remain in the flesh /is more necessary /for your benefit. /
Only, /conduct yourselves in a way /worthy of the gospel of Christ.

— **The Word of the Lord. ~ Thanks be to God.**

Alleluia Verse – [Acts 16, 14b]

♪ Open our hearts, O Lord, ~ to listen to the words, of your Son. ♪

Gospel – A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew [Matthew 20: 1-16a]

Jesus told his disciples this parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out at dawn to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with them for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. Going out about 9 o’clock, the landowner saw others standing idle in the marketplace, & he said to them,
“You too go into my vineyard, & I will give you what is just.’ So they went off.
And he went out again around noon, & around 3 o’clock, & did likewise. Going out about 5 o’clock,
the landowner found others standing around, & said to them, ‘Why do you stand here idle all day?’
They answered, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You too go into my vineyard.’
When it was evening the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Summon the laborers & give them their pay,
beginning with the last & ending with the first.’
When those who had started about 5 o’clock came, each received the usual daily wage.
So when the first came, they thought that they would receive more, but each of them also got the usual wage.
And on receiving it they grumbled against the landowner, saying,
‘These last worked only one hour, & you have made them equal to us, who bore the day’s burden & the heat.’
He said to one of them in reply, ‘My friend, I am not cheating you.
Did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what is yours & go.
What if I wish to give this last one the same as you? ~ Or am I not free to do as I wish with my own money?
Are you envious because I am generous?’
Thus, the last will be first, & the first will be last.”

— **The Gospel of the Lord. ~ Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

My name is **Sr. Anna Tantsits** / I am a **Sister, Servant of the Immaculate Heart of Mary**, Scranton, PA, & /
my principal ministry / during the last 25 yrs / has been
preaching Parish Missions / Retreats /
with Fr Peter / in US & Canada
your **Syracuse Diocesan Mission Cooperative** asked me to speak to you /
on behalf of our **IHM Sister-missionaries** in Sicuani, Peru /



Praying over this weekend's scriptures / this hymn came to mind. / While Fr Peter plays / -see if you can name it. / *Come to Me*

♪ **Come to Me** / all who labor / & are heavy burdened / & I shall give you rest. /

Take up my yoke / & / learn from me / for I am meek / & humble of heart /

and you'll find rest / for your souls. /

Yes, / my yoke is easy / and my burden / is light. ♪

All of the **scriptures** of **today** / reflect on / **God's generosity** / &

the abundance of the gifts / he has given us /

to deal with / what comes up in our lives / each day

¹ In the Gospel of Matthew / The **landowner** in the Parable says /

"Are you **upset** / because **I'm generous** ?"

² In the Book of the Prophet Isaiah / **God** says "**my thoughts** are not your thoughts. /

Nor are your ways / **my ways.**" /

³ In the Responsorial Psalm / the **Lord** is near / to **ALL** who call upon **him** /

the **Lord** is good to **ALL**, / & compassionate toward / **ALL** his works. /

⁴ In Paul's Letter to the Philippians / Conduct yourselves / in a **way** /

worthy of / the **gospel** of **Christ**. /

To watch a video of this talk click on this link https://youtu.be/JT_jSaDDzuE

It is also available on our Facebook Page - Franciscan Ministry of the Word at Bethany Ministries

over 50 yrs ago /when the Scranton IHM Sisters asked themselves/

“How can we live the Gospel / with our brothers & sisters around the world/

they discerned/to share Jesus’ love for the life of the **“world”** –with the people of Peru./

And over 25 yrs. ago/the Bishop asked the sisters who were in Peru/

to establish a small parish / at the edge of the town of **Sicuani** . / in the **southern Andes Mountains**/

—11,000 **feet** [over 2 miles] **above** sea level / — a 2 day journey **up** from Lima /

Presently / **Sr. Eileen** administers the parish there / with **Sr. Ancilla** / & **Sr. Norma** [one of our Peruvian Sisters]./

When the sisters first arrived/they noticed that many parents/ **from the** outlying Andean communities/

rented a room in town/so that their sons could stay during the week/& go to high school nearby./

since **No girls were included** in the plan,/the **Srs** secured grant money/to purchase a house & furniture/

so the girls could stay with the sisters during the week/ & **also enroll** in the **secondary school**./

Each girl pays the equivalent of \$7.00 a month,/but no one is refused/if that amount is too much./

of course/it really doesn't cover the whole cost./

Once a year each of the boarders/gets a turn to donate "**standing meat**

—a **lamb**/to provide meat twice a week for all of them./

Other things are also purchased in the market/to supplement the girls’ diet/

The girls go home on Fri & most return on Sun. /Some walk 5 hours each way/

to get an education./

On Sat afternoons,/teenagers help with the children's catechesis/in the various neighborhoods of the parish./

usually they are 7th & 8th graders/who work with the younger children./

Most **adults** there are not accustomed/to weekly liturgies/**because** in the small Andean villages they came from/

Mass was **celebrated** only **once** a year./Consequently, those at Sat evening Mass/**are** mostly children [**& dogs**]./

who come **early** for **Sat Mass**/to play in the meeting room where the sisters have **‘LEGOS’**./ When **Sr. Eileen**

returns to **Peru** from a visit to the **U.S.** /her suitcase is actually **only** ½ full of clothes —most is **legos**, games & such./

Since most adults don’t go to Mass/Eileen also shares scriptures in church/ with the police every Monday/

before they go to work for the week. / Once /they had an especially hard job /ahead of them, so they asked/

if she would leave the candle burning **after** they left/-so they’d **all** get home safely to their families. /

But how are things going in **PERU** /these days **during** the **Pandemic**? /I thought it best to summarize/

Sr.Eileen’s own words of **UPDATING**/from our most recent **IHM NEWSLETTERS**

During this awful **Coronavirus pandemic**, many Peruvians felt bad they couldn't participate in the Holy Week processions. **The Archbishop of Lima told them they were personally living the Passion of Christ in their lives** as they were restricted in so many ways of choosing where they go & what they do. **as well as seeing so many of their people suffer & die.**

Usually, we're at early morning mass in Sicuani **but now** **there's been a longer time to pray & meditate by the window in my room.** Each day, I observe the poor people who receive meals from the soup kitchen **pushing & pulling the carts that collect the garbage in our town, taking it to a central place where a truck picks it up.** They begin work at 3am & are required to participate this way if they want to be fed. To me, it's a modern example of carrying one's cross. **Other people from the Andean communities walk by, carrying heavy loads of corn or potatoes or even slaughtered sheep on their backs to sell in the market & then return home, lugging supplies they'd bought in town. Normally trucks would take them back to their villages, but now no traffic is allowed** —another way of the cross for them.

We've had a better than average corn & lima bean harvest from our garden this year & we are sharing some with the poor families we know. **A few weeks ago, Ancilla saw 4 police standing on the corner & went over to ask permission to take out the car to make food deliveries.** Ancilla gave them each a chocolate bar, saying **"Don't throw the wrapper in the street."** They laughed & replied, **"Yes, Sister."** A little humor goes a long way!

At the end of Lent, Ancilla had the idea to hang pictures of the Stations of the Cross on the outside wall of our house. Norma got a ladder & hung them high enough to be out of reach **but** one night someone lifted the 5th station. **We tried to put a charitable interpretation on the thievery, saying maybe the person was inspired by Simon's kindness, or worse yet, they needed some kindling to start the fire to cook breakfast.** I was able to do a new one & **all stayed intact for Good Friday.** Currently there's an **Alleluia banner** hanging out the 2nd floor window to celebrate **Easter.**

We're able to tune into mass on Facebook after a few glitches in the beginning. **At 1st images on the laptop were sideways.** Rather than lie on the floor to get a better perspective, we closed our eyes & just listened. **Other masses from Toronto & South Dakota came through, but, now we can tune in locally.**

At 5pm we play cards --at 6pm **mass on line** & dinner at 7pm. --With lots of corn & lima beans --we're being creative. For fear of the church altar wine turning into vinegar, we took it down to the house & use it now & then for a **night cap.** **We visited families again last week, & felt terrible that a crippled woman & her 3 children hadn't eaten in 3 days.** I called **CARITAS** asking if they could help with some staples. They **arrived** within an **hour** with a pick up truck & extra food. **Some other passing women, asked if their families could also be included in the food distribution.** It was a modern day experience of the multiplication of the **loaves & fishes.** So, we're **all** in this **together** as the **quarantine continues.**

The Toyota truck / wound its way very slowly up & around / the rutted dirt road / from Sicuani /
to the top of the mountain / overlooking the city. /
It had to go slowly / because it was carrying a very precious passenger : / Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament
in a Monstrance affixed to a pedestal / held fast by one of the priests / who was riding with the Bishop.

No procession through / the streets was possible / because of Covid-19. /

The virus has spread / throughout all 4 Provinces that / make up the Prelature of Sicuani. /

When arriving at the top of the mountain, / the Bishop, prayed over & blessed /
in the 4 directions / where the Provinces of the Prelature are located / to conclude Benediction. /

The event was carried on Facebook, TV & radio / to the people of the whole region, /
thus enabling the 3 IHM Sisters in Sicuani / to share it. /

All of our Peruvian Associates / & their families / are affected by the pandemic / that's sweeping our world /
yet they're finding new ways / to carry out their ministries /
in these days of quarantine, / extreme caution / & loss. /

They've adapted / their approach to ministry /
as they continue to work closely / with the IHM Srs in Sicuani /
& even though / they ministered in / extreme conditions & circumstances before Covid19 /
-now / it is all the more challenging. /

If you want to see more / go to our IHM website, www.sistersofihm.org
/ put in 'PERU' / to find more stories & pictures /

We are **all** called to be **evangelists** /once you *have been* /to the **Well** of the **Baptismal Font** you no longer have a **choice** /

IF you will be an **evangelist** /—[that is someone who *goodnewses* others] /

the **ONLY** choice you have is **how** you will do it. /

I want to offer **some** practical ways /**you** can respond to God's call / & invite you to choose **how you will do** it!

1st You can contribute **generously** to the **2nd** collection today / to enable missionaries, /like **Sr. Eileen & Sr. Ancilla & Sr. Norma** /

to share the **Good News** that Christ **still** / feeds the hungry & walks with the **oppressed** /

Without your financial support / it would be **impossible** for **them** to **continue their work** /

2nd You can *pray* for missionaries, / **Priests**, / **Religious Brothers & Sisters**, / & **lay men & women** like yourselves /

who live in Peru / & **give of their lives as IHM Associates** / to **spread the love & mercy of Christ** /

And Our sisters in Sicuani have volunteers from 2 European countries / that serve **with them** / for a year at a time. /

We are **all** called to be missionaries by our **Baptism** /

— whether we / **give** to the **missions** by **going** **or** **go** to the **missions** by **giving** /

We can respond to that call / through our **prayer**, / our **choices** for justice, / **or** our **financial support** /

—In the name of the **IHM Sisters** who *serve on the Mt tops of in Peru* / I thank you / for **your contributions** & **your prayers** /

Today-**You** heard Scripture remind us / of **God's generous & abundant gifts** to meet each days' needs /

you also share **His life** with others / in **your own** daily **living out** / of **your Baptism** /

and I thank **you** / for being partners with the sisters /

in their sowing the seeds of the **Good News** / in the **Andes**. /

May you hear Jesus singing / these words / of today's Scriptures / in your hearts

#435  **SEEK YE FIRST / THE KINGDOM OF GOD. / AND HIS RIGHTEOUS,**

AND ALL THESE THINGS / SHALL BE ADDED UNTO YOU /

AL-LE-LU, / AL-LE-LU-IA. /

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