

CTBI RESOURCES FOR LENT 2021

THE POET'S GOSPEL

INTRODUCTIONS TO CHOSEN SECTIONS



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WEEK ONE

PART A: HISTORY



'The Poet's Gospel' begins, not with the birth of Jesus, but his arrival on the public stage. We find a society deeply uncomfortable with itself, and a widespread recognition of the need for change – a change that begins with personal remorse and a commitment to live in another better way. Many were coming to John the Baptist seeking peace and forgiveness, but having preached his own message of repentance, he points them to Jesus.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- As we look out on today's world, where do we recognise the need for change?
- What in our own lives needs to change this Lent so as to make us more authentic followers and disciples of Jesus?

WEEK TWO

PART F: NON-CONFORMITY



In this part of the Gospel story we see Jesus presented as someone bringing good news to God's people. This he does in many ways but particularly through his ministry of healing. Yet the response from those in authority to something that is clearly 'good' is not as welcome as one might expect. Jesus is criticised for his actions and rumours are spread to undermine his growing influence.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- In a time when truth itself is under threat, who's version of reality do we accept and why?
- What are the signs of authenticity that we recognise and accept as we make our way in the world?

WEEK THREE

PART J: RECRUITMENT



Jesus' trust in those who are following him is evidenced in his sending out disciples to prepare the road ahead. Yet they are not without advice or instruction, for Jesus asks them to behave with integrity as they proclaim the coming Kingdom of God. In this part of 'The Poet's Gospel' we find Jesus speaking of leaven, a small amount of which has a great effect in the making of bread. Assuring his disciples that their influence would be highly significant, he later warns them to stay away from 'the leaven of the Pharisees'. It is clear that there is more than one kind of leaven active in the world.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- Who are the people we have come across this year who's influence we admire and would wish to emulate?
- In what ways have we noticed the effect of our own contribution to the greater good as we navigate these strange pandemic times?

WEEK FOUR

PART M: WHOM TO LOVE



In this part of our story, the identity of Jesus and the breadth of his mission is unveiled. We read of him welcoming public sinners reviled by the local population; healing ten lepers whose condition made them outcasts from society; and speaking in parables about how goodness and mercy overturn the prejudice and resentment that is found both within families and in wider society. It is clear that the love and favour of God is freely available to all and this is what many found so challenging in his message.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- In a world with so much division, prejudice and conflict, where do we feel called to be agents of mercy and forgiveness?
- When the accepted norms of society conflict with the Gospel of Love, how can we present, and live out, an alternative vision?

WEEK FIVE

PART Q: LAZARUS LIVES



In this part of 'The Poet's Gospel' we find opponents of Jesus coming to a decision to get rid of him. The portrayal implies that the raising of Lazarus to life – perhaps the most powerful demonstration of the power of God at work in the life and ministry of Jesus – was the tipping point in their growing opposition. Certainly, the scene is one of increasing threat and danger as Jesus takes the road to Jerusalem. With eyes wide open he enters the city in humble obedience to the will of his loving Father.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- Jesus instructs his followers to unbind Lazarus and set him free. In what areas of our own lives do we seek to be made free, both for our own benefit and that of those around us?
- As we journey through Holy Week in the footsteps of Jesus, who will we be carrying with us, longing and praying for their healing, happiness and peace?

WEEK SIX

HOLY WEEK



During Holy Week we invite you to listen to the following parts of 'The Poet's Gospel' which refer to this time:

- Part R: Prophecy
- Part S: Arrest
- Part T: Trial
- Part U: Sentence
- Part V: Crucifixion and Resurrection
- Part W: Final Instructions