



# Christ in Our Neighborhood

## Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

### Prayer

Father, You heal us and gather us to Yourself. You do not leave us abandoned. Your desire is for us to be in communion with You. Heal us and restore us to that most perfect life with You and with Your Son and Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.

### Commentary

#### 1st Reading: Job 7:1-4, 6-7

In Shakespeare's King Lear, the king responds to his daughter's desire to get rid of his knights since he no longer needs them. He says, "Man's life's as cheap as beast's."

Indeed! For humanity, life is cheap. Or, it certainly has become cheap. How often do we read and hear of victims of mass shootings, gang violence, war, and even poverty as if it were a part of some daily TV series? It's all too much. So we tune it out.

Life is cheap! What do we have as human beings to remind us otherwise?

As people of faith, we believe our answer lies in God who is love. We trust that someone believes in us, even when we do not believe in Him or in ourselves. But what if we don't believe God loves us?

The story of Job is such an important one for us because even he believed that his life was worthless. "My life is like the wind," he said. Job's faith in a God who loved him was put to the test. Of course, the story does not leave us in despair. In the end, God does believe in us. For God, our life is not cheap. It is precious. And He does everything to heal and restore it.

### Questions

Do you believe that you are precious to God?

### Commentary

#### 2nd Reading: 1 Cor 9:16-19, 22-23

There is a freedom in knowing that God loves us and believes in us. We believe that we are God's special possession.

We have no further place to go than to the Cross itself to find how much our God loves us.

## Healed & Restored:

### Part I of 2

For this reason, St. Paul proclaimed the Gospel with everything he had. He said, "Woe to me if I do not preach it!"

St. Paul knew that the Lord had healed and restored him from his past ways and brought him into communion with those he had previously persecuted. He was fully

alive! Living in Christ, Paul knew that his life was not cheap.

However, as free as he was to live a life in Christ, he willingly placed himself under the mantle of obedience. He said, "I have made myself a slave to all so as to win over as many as possible." Following Christ, Paul was willing to make his life cheap (in the worldly sense) in order to proclaim the Good News that we are highly valued by God.

### Question

Would you call yourself a slave or servant to the Gospel?

You are encouraged to open your home and invite a friend to break open Scripture and study Word of God made fresh through *Christ in Our Neighborhood*.

Visit: [dphx.org/Christ-in-our-neighborhood](http://dphx.org/Christ-in-our-neighborhood)

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## Commentary

### Gospel: Mark 1:29-39

Our world has suffered greatly since the beginning of time. Both human and natural disasters cause us to want to either give up on life or fix it ourselves.

It is good that most of us want to make life a better place. Indeed! We should all desire to leave this world in a better condition than when we had first encountered it when we were born.

However, as we try to heal and restore this world, we know that it is going to eventually fade away. Both faith leaders and scientists can agree on this. So why are we even trying?

The answer is simple. Nobody wants to give up on our world quite yet. In fact, many are looking to preserve our lives, restore our planet, and rescue us from the brink of destruction.

People are always looking for something or someone to heal and restore the world that we know. This was true even for Simon and the disciples who found Jesus praying by Himself. Knowing that Jesus just healed Simon's mother-in-law and expelled a few demons, Simon said, "Everyone is looking for you."

But Jesus had other plans. He came to proclaim His Word that was life-giving. His Kingdom would bring our broken world to wholeness and to Himself. He said, "For this purpose have I come." For Christ, even in our brokenness, our life is not cheap. He restores us to Himself.

### Question

Who in your life needs healing?

### This Week's Task

In just a few weeks, we will begin the Season of Lent. Make it your aim to find a friend or neighbor and share Christ in Our Neighborhood with them. Invite them into your existing group or start a new group just for the six weeks of Lent. Visit the website for information on how to host a group.

## Group Prayer

Pray the following from Bishop Fulbert of Chartres (970 AD):

How trivial are our concerns compared with the complexity of your universe. How stupid we are compared with the genius of your universe. Yet, during every minute and every second of our lives you are present, within and around us. You give your whole and undivided attention to each and every one of us. Our concerns are your concerns. And you are infinitely patient with our stupidity. I thank you with all my heart, knowing that my thanks are worthless compared with your greatness.

The prayer continues with Psalm 147

### Psalm

**Response: Praise the Lord, who heals the brokenhearted.**

Praise the LORD, for he is good;  
sing praise to our God, for he is gracious;  
it is fitting to praise him.  
The LORD rebuilds Jerusalem;  
the dispersed of Israel he gathers.

**R. Praise the Lord, who heals the brokenhearted.**

He heals the brokenhearted  
and binds up their wounds.  
He tells the number of the stars;  
he calls each by name.

**R. Praise the Lord, who heals the brokenhearted.**

Great is our Lord and mighty in power;  
to his wisdom there is no limit.  
The LORD sustains the lowly;  
the wicked he casts to the ground.

**R. Praise the Lord, who heals the brokenhearted.**

**Conclude with an Our Father**