

Holy Textures

Understanding the Bible in its own time and in ours

Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

Year B, Season of Pentecost

Proper 11, Ordinary Time 16

Sunday Between July 17 and July 23 Inclusive

7th Sunday After Pentecost 2009

Read the passage: [The Message](#) or [The New Revised Standard Version \(NRSV\)](#).

Click [here](#) for an easy to print or email Adobe PDF version of this note.

I'm tempted to rant once again about the unhelpful choices - from a preracher's point of view - of the Revised Common Lectionary. Why are the verses 6:30-34 not part of the reading [two weeks ago](#) as they are the conclusion of that story? And why are we skipping over the wonderful stories of the feeding of the 5,000 (Verses 35-44), and of Jesus walking on water (Verses 45-52)? Sigh.

Verses 30-32 are a wonderful lesson for the start of the summer season here in the Northern Hemisphere. Especially Jesus' invitation in Verse 31:

Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.

Thank you Jesus.

Recently, the past Moderator of the United Church of Canada, The Right Reverend Dr. Peter Short, read a beautiful poem to our Conference:

Camas Lilies

Consider the lilies of the field,
the blue banks of camas opening
into acres of sky along the road.
Would the longing to lie down
and be washed by that beauty
abate if you knew their usefulness,
how the natives ground bulbs
for flour, how the settler's hogs
uprooted them, grunting in gleeful
oblivion as the flowers fell?

Holy Textures

Understanding the Bible in its own time and in ours

And you, what of your rushed and
useful life? Imagine setting it all down
papers, plans, appointments, everything,

leaving only a note: Gone to the fields
to be lovely. Be back when I'm through
with blooming.

Even now, unneeded and uneaten,
the camas lilies gaze out above the grass
from their tender blue eyes.

Even in sleep your life will shine.

Make no mistake.

Of course, your work will always matter.

Yet Solomon in all his glory
was not arrayed like one of these.

-Lynn Ungar from What We Share (Collected Meditations, Volume 2)

Try posting this note on your office door / Facebook / Twitter / blog / voice mail / memo to your Board:

Gone to the fields to be lovely.

Be back when I'm through with blooming.

And say a grateful, gleeful prayer of thanks all the while for the poetry of Lynn Ungar.

Too bad that Jesus never took the mandatory course in "Personal Self-Care 101." 'Cause the whole retreat thing gets ruined in Verse 34. Does the man have no sense of personal boundaries? Has he never read about co-dependence? If there is only one verse that could be nailed as the evil core of clergy burn-out, Mark 6:34 is my candidate.

I'm trying not to rant about the Lectionary, but why not just leave out Verses 33-34 and the rest? There is a beautiful and needful sermon in 30-32 alone.

David Ewart,

www.davidewart.ca