

Lectionary
Readings for every day
You Select!



	Psalm	Epistle/OT	Gospel
Monday 21 June:	60:1-5, 11-end	2 Kings 17:5-8, 13-15, 18	Matt 7:1-5
Tuesday 22 June:	48:1,2,8-end	2 Kings 19:9-11, 14-21a, 31-36	Matt 7:6,12-14
Wednesday 23 June:	119:33-40	2 Kings 22:8-13; 23:1-3	Matt 7:15-20
Thursday 24 June:	79:1-9,12	2 Kings 24:8-17	Matt 7:21-29
Friday 25 June:	137:1-6	2 Kings 25:1-12	Matt 8:1-4
Saturday 26 June:	74:1-3, 21-end	Lam 2:2,10-14, 18,19	Matt 8:5-17
Sunday 27 June <u>Pentecost 5</u> Ps 77:1-2,11-20; 2 Kings 2:1-2,6-14; Gal 5:1,13-25; Luke 9:51-62			

	Psalm	Epistle/OT	Gospel
Monday 28 June:	50:16-23	Amos 2:6-10,13-end	Matt 8:18-22
Tuesday 29 June:	5:8-end	Amos 3:1-8;4:11-12	Matt 8:23-27
Wednesday 30 June:	50:7-14	Amos 5:14,15,21-24	Matt 8:28-end
Thursday 1 July:	19:7-10	Amos 7:10-end	Matt 9:1-8
Friday 2 July:	119:1-8	Amos 8:4-6,9-12	Matt 9:9-13
Saturday 3 July:	85:8-end	Amos 9:11-end	Matt 9:14-17
Sunday 4 July <u>Pentecost 6</u> Ps 30; 2 Kings 5:1-14; Gal 6:(1-6),7-16; Luke 10: 1-11,16-20			

	Psalm	Epistle/OT	Gospel
Monday 5 July:	145:2-9	Hosea 2:16-18,21,22	Matt 9:18-26
Tuesday 6 July:	103:8-12	Hosea 8:4-7,11-13	Matt 9:32-38
Wednesday 7 July:	115:3-10	Hosea 10:1-3,7,8,12	Matt 10:1-7
Thursday 8 July:	105:1-7	Hosea 11:1,3,4,8,9	Matt 10:7-15
Friday 9 July:	80:1-7	Hosea 14:2-10	Matt 10:16-23
Saturday 10 July:	51:1-7	Isa 6:1-8	Matt 10:24-33
Sunday 11 July <u>Pentecost 7</u> Ps 82; Amos 7:1-7; Col 1:1-14; Luke 10:25-37			

in the HCUC

No. 9

For 20 June 2010

Dear Friends

I sometimes watch the local TV programme which features the work of the SPCA in Auckland. Two things in each episode always grab me—both in the gut. One is the unbelievable neglect and cruelty suffered by so many animals. The other is the gentle, understanding and care shown not only by the trained professionals, but also by the number of individuals who voluntarily and patiently nurture damaged, injured and traumatised animals back to health and trust. Or like the woman who took a baby blue penguin to rock pools for weeks so that it could learn to cope in the ocean and on land. Seldom is there a programme which does not feature a dog which has been either ill-treated or injured and I note the eyes looking apprehensive and my mind goes to the first lines of John Weir’s hymn: “*Will you offer me compassion? Will you walk the road with me?*” It is a voiceless question made eloquent by the dog’s eyes.

- * And this is what we know—there is both a dire lack of compassion in so many places and in the lives of so many people and animals, and at the same time there is a great underground river of compassion flowing strongly through the lives of ordinary people out towards people, animals and all creation. What is compassion? What blocks its flow? How can we be part of its increase? When Matthew Fox worked on his ground breaking book titled “*A Spirituality Named Compassion*” (1979) he explored 13 major Protestant and Catholic theological encyclopaedias. Only one had an entry under “compassion”. He refers to it as the exile of “compassion”, as a healthy healing concept and its fall into being a mere sentimental attitude. Too often compassion has become pity. And often today compassion has been replaced by competition.
- * Pity usually carries the image of the strong pitying someone who is weak or inferior, and not of someone who is aware of shared weakness and so has a sense of feeling that links into mutuality with no sense of separation or superiority.
- * To find or recover a wholesome view of compassion we need only do some exploring in the Hebrew scriptures. The following Psalms are a good place to start (Ps 86:15; 111:4; 145:8-9). NB: Modern translations often use “mercy” instead of “compassion”.

Sincerely - Lester

THE SOURCE, RICHNESS AND DIMENSIONS OF COMPASSION

We can only hint at all that Compassion embraces. Perhaps the biggest hint, not surprisingly, comes out of the way Jesus lived and how he responded to people. See him moved with compassion (Mark 1:41, 6:34; Matt 9:36), not 'pity' which is used instead of 'compassion'!! Listen to him tell the stories of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son. All of these are 'compassion-in-action', never just a condescending attitude of pity. The compassion is loving-kindness.

Source: When Jesus calls his followers to be compassionate (Luke 6:36) it may sound like another impossible command, another rule tacked up on the notice board, another 'ought' or 'should' that leaves us feeling guilty because somehow we feel we don't have the inner resources to act with compassion. Too often the gospel has been turned into moralism—telling people what they should do without telling them that the resources for such moral behaviour that enriches life, lie within us already. When we remember our origin in the infinite, divine spirit and real-ise it we are tapping into the vast inexhaustible reservoir of loving-kindness and compassion—and not a tiny thimbleful limited to our smallness as we feel it. We already have what we need to be compassionate. This is true of every man, woman and child, for the mysterious breath of life has been and is continuing to be breathed into us. Be what you are.

Richness: Life as we experience it on the day to day level tends to accentuate our differences and our sense of separation. No wonder competition comes to replace compassion as we see others competing for what seems like limited resources—space on earth, positions of power, material resources, and all the more subtle wants that human egos hunger for. Yet, the deeper reality is as expressed by Thomas Merton in his final lecture only an hour or so before his death:- *"The whole idea of compassion is based on a keen awareness of the interdependence of all these living beings, which are all part of one another, and all involved in one another."* The really significant aspect of compassion is not feelings of pity but a sense of togetherness. This awareness urges us to celebrate with another's joy and to grieve at another's pain or sorrow.

Dimensions: There is insufficient room to do justice to the many implications of compassion—and one of the most significant is that compassion is always about justice making. The prophet Micah (6:8) sums it up *"What does Yahweh ask of you except to do what is just and to show constant love."* This is only one important dimension. There are more. So it seems to be calling for something more in the next Shalom.

COMPASSION

— recognises we are all part of:
One Another — Nature — The Cosmos

- ▣ The Jewish mystical tradition has the wonderful saying: "Kindness gives to another. Compassion knows no other."
 - ▣ The starting point of all compassion is — "that I am not only I but we are one another."
... M Fox commenting on Jesus' teaching on compassion. He then adds a deeper dimension and mystery by indicating Jesus implies we are also God. This confirms and seals our oneness because we all emerge from and live by the Being of God.
- ◇ Martin Buber explained that the I-thou relationship is not only an experience between individual people and groups of people but among people and trees, people and animals, people and music, people and poetry, and people and the whole of nature ... rivers, oceans, earth, sky, sun and moon and stars.
 - ◇ Compassion extends to the entire universe and all of creation according to the Hebrew scriptures. The Psalmist puts it clearly and simply: "His (God's) compassion is over all he has made."
(Ps 145:9)

On November 12th 2009 a Charter for Compassion was launched internationally. Karen Armstrong, scholar and author, is at the heart of this initiative.

Details and the Charter are available on the following:

1. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/compassion>
2. <http://charterforcompassion.org/about>