

Fr. Perozich comments –

I do not have to preach on this gospel this Sunday, but when it comes around again, this reflection by Elizabeth Mitchell will influence my homily.

Not a few people say that they “meditate” . I wonder if they even know what that means.

*In the prayer style called **Lectio Divina**, Meditation is an active process where a story is read 4 times, in this case the gospel of the Good Samaritan. The listener is encouraged to place himself into the different characters in the story: the robber, the victim, the Samaritan, the innkeeper in order to allow the thoughts and emotions that are evoked to take over the listener in order to enter into the character’s experience.*

Mitchell has done that here for herself, and she has done it very well. It may be different for each other reader/listener of the story.

My brother priests and I hear the “beat down” stories very often. Some are heart wrenching for us just listening to the suffering in the voice of the penitent/victim of the accuser Satan.

At other times, an emotion of righteous anger flares up in me when I think of some of the “robbers” who beset this victim:

Abortionists and government leaders who support and promote killing the life of the baby and wounding the soul of the mother;

Sexually immature people such as Martin, Gramick, Hollerich, Stowe and other church members who step on the necks of people with same sex attraction and gender dysphoria, setting aside Jesus and the Holy Spirit in order to keep such afflicted people in their deviant kingdoms;

School boards and cooperating teachers deforming rather than forming children in gender identity and racial theories;

Medical personnel making a living off the suffering of gender dysphoria;

Church leaders who virtue signal with “accompaniment” rather than binding the wounds with the oil and wine of truth and repentance, just to name a few.

When priests try to be the Good Samaritans, some are canceled from ministry, no longer able to provide spiritual care for the victims.

In the Sacrament of Penance victim souls are restored. Once restored, each must go and offer restoration to others, bringing them also to the Holy Spirit in Penance in order to set the victim back on the road, not to Jericho, rather to the new and eternal Jerusalem where Jesus Christ the King reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit for all eternity.

The Road of Merciful Love

By [Elizabeth A. Mitchell](#)
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2022

Perhaps we have found ourselves there. With the man lying on the side of the road, **beaten down by the Accuser, wounded by our sins, feeling lifeless and alone. The spirits of confusion, discord, anger, insult, doubt, and fear have attacked us unawares. We have given in to them and they have beaten us down. Robbing us of our joy and peace and strength, they have departed to continue “roaming the earth and patrolling it” (Job 1:7), in search of their next victim.**

Christ identifies our condition in the parable of the man beset by robbers on the road to Jericho – the Parable of the Good Samaritan – explaining, “He fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead.” (Luke 10:30)

The abandonment of sin is real. We feel most isolated, most unable to be reached by others, when we have fallen into the clutches of the lying robbers. The spiritual brigands have wreaked their havoc in our souls and fled, leaving us to languish.

And when we find ourselves in this condition, with the man lying on the side of the road, unable to pick ourselves up and restore grace in our souls, where can we look for help? What loving hand will reach toward us? **How can we be restored when we are beyond our strength?**

In line for Confession recently, I realized that we were all in line on the side of that road. The road to Jericho. There was only one person who was going to stop, in all his compassion and accept our wounds and bind them up: the priest in Confession, acting on behalf of Christ.

With his wine and oil for our wounds, the Holy Spirit through the sacramental priesthood ministers to us: “But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.” (Luke 10:33-34)

The only thing to heal us, to restore our souls, is the grace of God. He comes with profound mercy to us in our exhaustion and our inability to heal ourselves, and He anoints us with compassion. The Lord God, in His power and His mercy, lifts us up from the side of the road.



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In his *Treatise Against Heresies*, St. Irenaeus describes this grace as the “dew of God,” explaining:

If we are not to be scorched and made unfruitful, we need the dew of God. **Since we have our accuser, we need an Advocate as well.** And so the Lord in his pity for man, who had fallen into the hands of brigands, **having himself bound up his wounds and left for his care two coins bearing the royal image, entrusted him to the Holy Spirit.**

We are lifted from the road onto God’s beast of burden, taken to the inn, and restored. **Out of pure compassion. Pure mercy.** Luke continues, “The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, saying, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I return.’” (Luke 10:35)

Irenaeus draws our attention to the coins “bearing the royal image” which are given on our behalf: “Now, through the Spirit, the image and inscription of the Father and the Son have been given to us, and it is our duty to use the coin committed to our charge and make it yield a rich profit for the Lord.”

A rich profit for the Lord.

Through our encounter with God and His grace, we are restored. And we are restored to serve Him. Our lying on the side of the road had a purpose. We lay there in order to be brought more fully and forever under the command of Christ, to be placed at His service once we have been restored to life and strength. We have been marked with the image and inscription of the Father and the Son, who have given us divine healing and salvation. We are charged with a mission and purpose.

“Go and do likewise,” Christ concludes his teaching. (Luke 10:37)

Go and do likewise. We can be vessels of mercy, pouring out oil and wine on the wounded, battered souls around us. They are everywhere. You don’t need to look in hidden corners. They are lying in the thoroughfare, standing at the gas station, hurting in your home, needing to be loved beneath their rough exterior. They are too weak to love, but they must *be loved*. They are in need of pure, unrequited compassion. **As the Good Samaritan entrusts the wounded soul to the Holy Spirit, we must do the same. As we have received, so must we give.**

And our journey does not end in the inn on the road to Jericho. Presumably, we were on a journey when we were waylaid. We have received pure mercy. We must continue our journey changed. With a grateful, penitent, purified heart, we set out upon our journey in His service, to go and do likewise. “Just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord,” Saint Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, teaches us, “continue to walk in

Him. . .strengthened in the faith as you were taught and overflowing with thankfulness.” (Col 2:6-7)

We are no longer lying on the side of the road. We have been made whole by grace. Using the coin committed to our charge, entrusting ourselves to the Holy Spirit, we set out anew upon the road of merciful love.

***Image:** *The Good Samaritan Paying the Innkeeper for the Care of the Wounded Man* by Heinrich Aldegrever [The MET, New York]

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