

15<sup>th</sup> Sunday C

July 10, 2022

St. Patrick

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**“A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead.”**

It was this Gospel story which the preacher chose, and it turned out to be his last sermon. He turned to *this* Gospel on the Good Samaritan. He gave this sermon some two miles south of here, at the Mason Temple, on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, a stormy night in 1968, the day before Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., took a sniper’s bullet to the neck,

Dr. King was in Memphis on behalf of the striking garbage workers of the city. Part of his sermon Dr. King put like this:

**“One day a man came to Jesus  
and he said to Jesus,  
Who is my neighbor?  
That question could have easily ended up  
In a philosophical and theological debate.  
But Jesus immediately pulled that question from mid-air,  
Placed it on a dangerous curve  
Between Jerusalem and Jericho...**

**The Jericho Road is a dangerous road...  
The first question that the priest asked,  
The first question that the Levite asked,  
‘If I stop to help this man  
What will happen to me?’  
But then the Good Samaritan came by.  
And he reversed the question:  
‘If I do not stop to help this man,  
What will happen to him?’  
That’s the question before you tonight” (1).**

Dr. King was saying that the lives of black garbage workers mattered. Today he would rightly say that black lives matter.

Further, St. Patrick’s, today’s Gospel doesn’t tell us the ethnicity, religion, or race of the man beaten up on the road from Jerusalem and Jericho. Whatever those

traits were—well, they didn't matter to the Samaritan man. **“If I do not stop to help this person, what will happen to her, or to him?”** *That* life mattered, and he acted.

**“Go, and do likewise.”** St. Patrick's: That's what Jesus tells us this Sunday after another bloody week, trailing upon a stream of other bloody weeks. How do *we* do it? Dorothy Day, the great Catholic activist, of deep spirituality, put it like this: “Stay small” (2).

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- (1) Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., quoted by Joan T. Beifuss in *At The River I Stand: Memphis, the 1968 strike, and Martin Luther King* (Memphis: B & W Books, 1985), pg. 279.
  - (2) As said by David Brooks in the NPR story, “Week in Politics: Deadly Sniper Attack on Dallas Police,” July 8, 2016.

## *General Intercessions*

*July 10, 2022*

*15 Sunday in Ordinary Time*

***You call us to holiness: make us a true sign of reconciliation and unity in a divided nation and Church; we pray to you, O Lord:***

***You want us to live as “the Good Samaritan on the banks of the Mississippi”: empower us, St. Patrick’s, to address the causes of injustice and bring healing to the broken in our community; we pray to you, O Lord—***

***You invite us to intimacy with you: quell our busyness and show us how to make time for good leisure and prayer; we pray to you, O Lord—***

***You heal the sick and console the grieving: lead us to reach out to those who mourn and to all those who are ill; we pray to you, O Lord—***

***You are the firstborn of the dead: raise up those who have died, especially Rosario Flores, Callie Stevens, Brother Ignatius Brown, and Father Bob Hoffstetter; we pray to you, O Lord—***

