



Ministerial Region of the Good Shepherd, Kirwan

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Seventh Sunday of Ordinary Time Year A – 23rd and 24th February 2020

Last Sunday after the Epiphany

One of the year's most acclaimed films is director Greta Gerwig's adaptation of Louisa May Alcott's novel *Little Women*.



It's the story of the four colourful and high-spirited March sisters, who live in Concord, Massachusetts, during and after the Civil War. While their father is away serving as a volunteer chaplain with Union forces, mother Marmee struggles to make ends meet — but Marmee always gives whatever the family has to anyone in need and instills such compassion and generosity in her daughters.

The four sisters differ in temperament and talent; each has her own hopes and dreams for the future. Meg is the responsible oldest sister yet loves the theatre and wants to be part of proper Concord society. Beth is the shy, thoughtful third-born, a talented pianist who adores her three sisters. Youngest Amy is the ambitious sister: a promising painter, Amy has been taken under the wing of their rich, imperious Aunt March, who instills in her youngest niece an understanding of the economic realities of marriage in the 19th century New England. Jo is the headstrong second eldest sister and the undisputed leader of the troupe, a writer who seeks to make her way through life on her own terms – and does.

It's not always harmonious in the March household. The four sisters argue and fight as all siblings do. There is a particularly ugly confrontation between Amy and Jo. Jo struggles with her anger at her sister. Her mother Marmee confides to her second daughter: "I am angry nearly every day of my life. I've learned to check the hasty words that rise to my lips, and when I feel that they mean to break out against my will, I just go away for a minute, and give myself a little shake for being so weak and wicked."



The moment portrays a mother's struggle with her righteous anger and society's demands that such anger be suppressed.

The story of the March sisters models Jesus' teachings on love in today's Gospel. Jesus readily acknowledges that love — love that is and of God — is not easy. It's demanding, often unreasonable and unfair. It means putting ourselves — and our disappointments and expectations — aside for the sake of the beloved. What is often most challenging about today's Gospel is not loving our "enemies" but loving our annoying sister or bratty brother. It's easy to "love" some nameless, demographic group we have little or nothing to do with; what's hard is to "love" the people we live with and work with and go to school with. "To love our enemies" is not just to declare a cease-fire but to create and maintain an environment where reconciliation is always possible, where acceptance and welcome are assured — even within our families and households.

Peace..... Dave

Act Justly, Love Tenderly and Walk Humbly with God. Micah.6:8