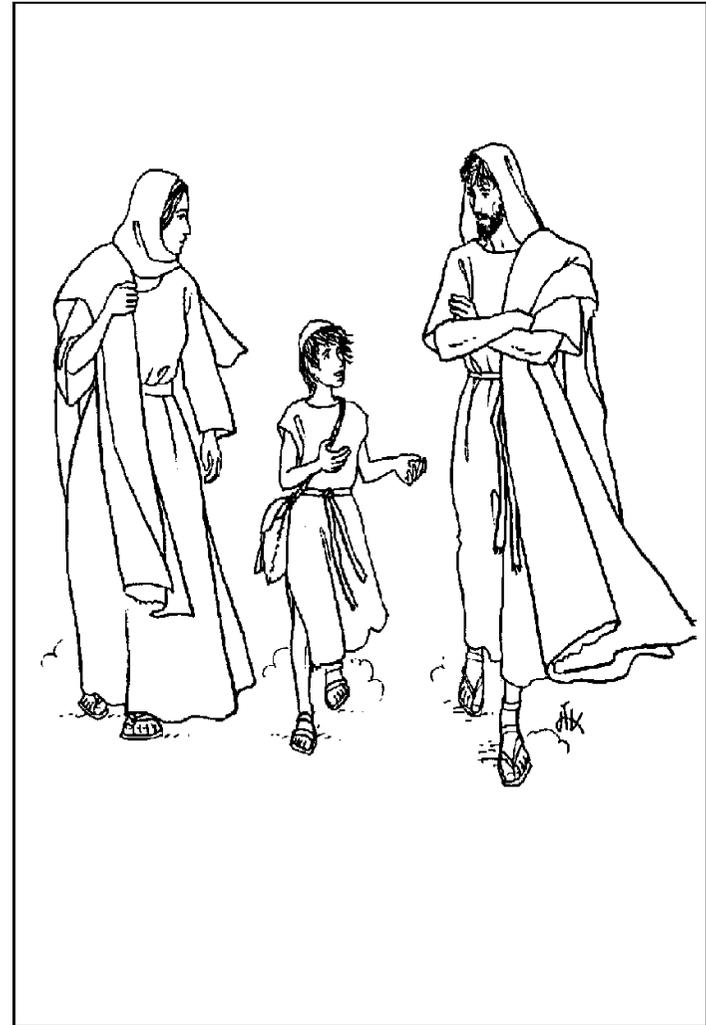


YOU ARE MY FRIENDS

On the Family Issue



JULY – SEPTEMBER 2016 96



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YOU ARE MY FRIENDS N^o 96

July - September 2016

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EDITORIAL

Family is the social unit which has its origin in the early stages of human race. It is the common factor uniting all cultures. Families are the building blocks of any society and guarantee the propagation of the human race. The strength and durability of any society or country depends on the proper functioning of families.

By family here we are limited to the traditional understanding i.e. man and woman and children where possible. Every culture and society has its own ways of preserving a family. But there are dynamics which can be cherished and can help to build families regardless of the people's culture or religious affiliation. Some of these dynamics are: Communication, managing conflict, self-confidence, control and consistency, and commitment.

Communication: In a family an atmosphere should be created where members can communicate freely. It is important that even the smallest member of the family is given the chance to express oneself.

Managing conflict: A certain amount of conflict management is required to preserve a family and keep its members connected. It is relevant to know that there are two forms of conflict, those which can transform the family and those which can destroy the family.

Self-confidence: Parents are under pressure these days from society, a society with values that may be contrary to the parents. Parents without self-confidence, and who also don't agree with each other, may give their children a confusing message or no message at all on the question of value.

Control and consistency: Health parental control involves the parents having an overall awareness of their children; of who they are, of what is going on in their lives. That means parents should be present to their children. Control is supported by consistency, meaning that the parents act, think, and behave in a predictable way.

Commitment: Each member of the family, from the youngest to the oldest, has the responsibility to make the family functional. Each member need to be committed to doing his or her part to make the family work.

As Christians, it is without doubt that the word of God, prayer and celebrations are fundamental for the building and growth of our Christian families.

The Editor

Sat 29th: End of Month Youth Recollection by OCD Fathers and SBVM Sisters

NOVEMBER

Sun 4th – Sat 12th: Session: An Eight-Day Preached Retreat
Fri 18th – Sun 20th: Retreat for Friends of Medjugorie
Sun 20th: CHRIST THE UNIVERSAL KING
Sun 20th – 26th: A Six Day Preached Retreat in Preparation for Advent
Sun 27th: FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
Sun 27th: Advent Youth Recollection by OCD Fathers and SBVM Sisters

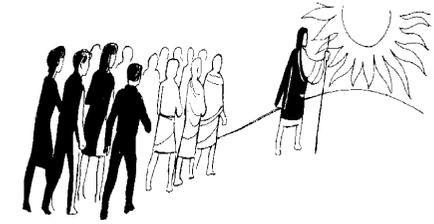
DECEMBER

Fri 2nd – Sun 4th: Advent Weekend Recollection (Fr A. Nsope)
Sun 4th – Thu 8th: A Regional Chapter for the Sisters of Our Lady
Fri 16th – Fri 23rd: An Eight-Day Preached Advent Retreat
Mon 26th – Mon 2nd Jan: A Seven-Day End of Year Preached Retreat

Contacts: 0995504566 or pnampota@gmail.com

0888078500 or ekufankumodzi@gmail.com

Contribution: for a retreat: USD12 per day per person and for a Session USD13 per day per person



NYUNGWI 2016 PROGRAM

JULY

Sun 3rd – Sat 9th: Free Booking for Retreats and Sessions
Sat 9th: Youth Recollection by OCD Fathers and SBVM Sisters
Sun 10th – Sat 16th: A Six-Day Preached Retreat
Sat 16th: THE SOLEMNITY OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT

CARMEL

Fri 22nd – Sun 24th: Weekend Recollection (Fr A. Nsope)
Sun 24th – Sat 30th: A Six-Day Directed Retreat (Fr John Paul Nampota)

AUGUST

Fri 5th – Sun 7th: Regional Assembly for the Divine Providence Sisters
Sun 7th – Sat 13th: A Six Day Preached Retreat for the Divine Providence Sisters
Sun 14th – Sun 21st: Preached Retreat for Secular Institute Missionaries of the Kingship of Christ

SEPTEMBER

Fri 2nd – Sun 4th: Weekend Recollection (Fr A. Nsope)
Sun 4th – Sat 10th: A Six-Day Directed Retreat
Sun 16th – Sat 24th: An Eight-Day Preached Retreat
Sat 24th: Day of Recollection for the Religious of the Archdiocese of Blantyre (Daughters of Wisdom)
Sun 25th – Sat 1st: *Creating an Alternative Space for Mercy in Our Religious Communities* (Fr J.P. Nampota)

OCTOBER

Sun 2nd – Sat 8th: Session on St John of the Cross for OCD Friars
Sat 15th: SOLEMNITY OF ST TERESA OF JESUS
Fri 16th – Sat 22nd: A Six-Day Preached Retreat
Sun 24th – Sat 30th: A Six-Day Directed Retreat

HOMILY COMMENTARIES

14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

03.07.2016

Is 66: 10-14c
Gal 6: 14-18
Lk 10:1-2. 17-20

Message of the Liturgy

Today we are called to be God's instruments of the Good news of Jesus. We cannot call ourselves followers of Jesus unless we make Jesus' message reach all the corners of the earth. The mission of Jesus is entrusted to us and let us not fail Him.

For the homily

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them out ahead of him.

Luke recollects in his gospel an important exhortation of Jesus addressed not only to the Twelve, but also to other numerous group of disciples who he sends as collaborators to his project of the kingdom of God. The words of Jesus constitute a kind of foundational letter in which his followers have to inspire their evangelical task. Let us look at some important points.

Start off now. Though we forget again and again, the Church is marked by the sending of Jesus. Thus, it is dangerous to conceive the Church as an institution founded in order to take care and to develop her own religion. The image of a prophetic movement that walks throughout the history according to the sending (going out of herself, thinking of the others, giving to the world the Good News) responds better to the original desire of Jesus. “The Church is not there for itself but for the humanity” (Benedict XVI).

Thus remaining in our past, in our doctrinal acquisitions, in our practices and customs is today a dangerous temptation. The church should not be enclosed in herself without prophets of Jesus or carriers of the Gospel.

Whenever you go into a town... cure those in it who are sick and say, “The kingdom of God is very near to you”. This is the great news. God is near to us, animating us to make life more human. But it is not enough to preach the truth that is really attractive and desirable. It is necessary to make it comprehensible: this can be done by thinking in terms of what can take people today towards the Gospel? How can they capture God as something new and good? Which gestures and words are asked of the Church today?

It is not enough to preach sermons from the altar. We have to learn to listen, welcome and heal the wounds of those who suffer... Only by doing this we will find humble and good words that may bring people closer to Jesus whose unfathomable tenderness puts us in contact with God, the Father of all.

“Whatever house you go into, let your first words be, “Peace to this house”. The Good News of Jesus is communicated with total respect, from a friendly and fraternal attitude, communicating peace. It is an error trying to impose it from the point of view of superiority, menace or resentment. It is against the Gospel to treat people without love only

ing”(FC, 11). The family in the Creator’s plan is the primary place of humanisation for the person and society and the cradle of life and love.

The Son of God, the Word made flesh (cf. Jn 1:14) in the womb of the Virgin Mother, lived and grew up in the family of Nazareth and participated at the wedding at Cana, where he added importance to the festivities with the first of his “signs” (cf. Jn 2:1-11). In joy, he welcomed his reception in the families of his disciples (cf. Mk 1:29-31; 2:13-17) and consoled the bereaved family of his friends in Bethany (cf. Lk 10:38-42; Jn 11:1-44) Returning to the beginning, Jesus taught the unity and faithfulness of the husband and wife, refuting the practice of repudiation and adultery. Jesus thereby affirmed the original dignity of the married love of man and woman.

The family has a central importance in reference to the person. It is where people are born and grow. It is in the family that the mutual giving of self (on the part of man and woman united in marriage) creates an environment of life in which children develop their potentialities, become aware of their dignity and prepare to face their unique and individual destiny (Centesimus Annus, 39). The family is the first and fundamental structure for human ecology, in which man receives his first formative ideas about truth and goodness, and learns what it means to love and to be loved, and that is what it actually means to be a person (Centesimus Annus, 39). The obligations of its members are not limited by the terms of a contract but derive from the very essence of the family, founded on the irrevocable marriage covenant.

Today family life is under threat. One of the threats to family life is homosexuality. It is of vital importance that at any cost we should fight for life and not only personal life but even life of the society.

Ludovic M. Bafuta, ocd.

Without families that are strong in their communion and stable in their commitment peoples grow weak. A society built on a family scale is a guarantee against drifting off into individualism or collectivism, because within the family the person is always at the centre of attention as an end and never as a means. In the family moral values are taught starting from the very first years of life, the spiritual heritage of the religious community and the cultural legacy of the nation are transmitted.

The priority of the family over society and over the State must always be affirmed. It is the procreative function of the family that holds society and the State in existence. The family possess inviolable rights and finds its legitimisation in human nature and not in being recognised by the State. It therefore follows that the family does not exist for society or the State, but society and the State exist for the family.

The biblical message on family has its roots in the creation of man and woman, both made in the image and likeness of God (cf. Gen 1:24-31; 2:4-25). Bound together by an indissoluble sacramental bond, those who are married experience the beauty of love, fatherhood, motherhood, and the supreme dignity of participating in this way in the creative work of God. In the gift of the fruit of their union, they assume the responsibility of raising and educating other persons for the future of humankind. Through procreation, man and woman fulfil in faith the vocation of being God's collaborators in the protection of creation and the growth of the human family. Saint Pope John Paul II commented on this aspect in *Familiaris consortio*: "God created man in his own image and likeness (cf. Gen 1:26, 27): calling him to existence through love, he called him at the same time for love. God is love (cf. 1 Jn 4:8) and in himself he lives a mystery of personal loving communion. Creating the human race in his own image and continually keeping it in being, God inscribed in the humanity of man and woman the vocation, and thus the capacity and responsibility, of love and communion (*Gaudium et spes*, 12). Love is therefore the fundamental and innate vocation of every human be-

because they do not accept our message. How can they accept it if they do not feel understood by those who present themselves as followers of Jesus?

Jesus asks his disciples that when they preach the kingdom of God, their first word-message is to offer peace to all. "Let your first words be, "Peace to this house". All of us can live reconciled and in friendship with Him. This is the first and decisive thing. "By faith we are judged righteous and at peace with God" (Rom 5, 1).

The Gospel is more than a doctrine, it is the person of Jesus: the humanising, saving and liberating experience that started with Him. Thus to evangelise is not only to propagate a doctrine, but to make present in the heart and life of the society saving power of the person of Jesus.

Bearing witness to the person of Jesus is an absolute primacy. Structures are needed precisely to sustain the life and the testimony of the followers of Jesus. Thus, the most important thing is not the number but the quality of evangelical life that the followers of Jesus can irradiate.

We are all included in that group of the seventy-two. All of us are sent. God trusts us. Let us live our life in the midst of the world: irradiating the goodness, the light and the peace of the Gospel.

Javier Compes, ocd

15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

10.07.2016

Deut 30: 10-14

Col 1:15-20

Lk 10: 25-37

Message of the Liturgy

Today's liturgy is challenging our self-centered way of being, whether the "self" is me, my family, my community, or my religion. Going through scriptures we discover that the commandment of love is not something unrealistic. It is something that is very realistic and practical. The question could be, who gets our love and compassion? If we can say everyone, everything, then not only are we good neighbors but we are also the beloved of God.

For the homily

Moses is completing the presentation of the laws, customs and ordinances which the people of Israel are bound to observe. When they fulfill these, the Lord will delight in the resulting prosperity of their fields, their cattle, and their fruitful bodies.

What we hear in today's first reading are verses of comfort. Though the laws are many and detailed, they are not strange or disorienting to their minds and hearts. Moses has said that the Lord will continue to circumcise their hearts so that they will all know to whom they belong. These

It is important to be present in a small way in the place of work, but with the presence which gives an impact than spend the whole empty presence, lasting hours.

It is most important the communion in the diocese than the action.

The most important, because the most intimate, the cross, whose result is not apparent, the fruits of self-emptying and human strength.

The most important is an open heart to everything (community, diocese, the universal church), without getting particular fixation, for what is important is to saw the seed.

The most important is to give witness to the faith in all the areas without pretense.



FAMILY AS THE CENTRE OF EVERY SOCIETY

The importance of family life cannot be over emphasised, however, with the so many ideologies crimping into our world today it is always good to remind each other about this reality of human life. Family is an epitome of every Christian community and indeed of human vocation. It is the first human society where one learns social responsibility and solidarity (CCC, 2224).

The sophisticated communication means today like internet, television, mobile phones, must not hinder the importance of warm connectedness whereby by all the five senses are involved in communication. It can be sad development seeing a family gathered together but each one stuck to his or her mobile phone.

Isaac Mpokwe, OCD

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF A PRIEST

Pro. W. Breuning of Bonn and Bishop K. Hemmerle of Aachen in a joint study for the Episcopal Conference of German came up with Ten Commandments for a priest (Breuning and Hemmerle, 1884: 232-233).

The most important is how I live as a priest than what I do as a priest.

The most important is what Christ does through me than what I do by myself.

The most important is for me to live the unity of Presbyterian than living as the minister for ministry.

The most important is the service of the word and prayer than that of activities.

It is important to follow spiritually my collaborator than doing my own activity.

words of the Law are in a head-language and a heart vernacular so that there is no need for certain wise persons to interpret them. They are clear when thought about and comforting when experienced as a way of God's loving them and their responding lovingly to God.

The Jews have the Word of God affixed to doorposts in a little box and can wear the Word of God in little cloth or leather pouches over their hearts and foreheads. Moses declaims that these Laws will keep them close to God as God is close to them. They are not unreasonable, or violent to the human spirit.

The Gospel contains a beautiful and equally threatening parable. A scholar of the law asks Jesus a question which marks the beginning of a long discussion than a simple request for information. Jesus, in His usual manner, answers a question with a question. The man knows well the dictates of the Law and responds correctly by citing the book of Deuteronomy 6:5 and the book of Leviticus 19:18. According to the Book of Leviticus 19: 18, loving neighbor is a sacred responsibility of the faithful Jewish person. So to extend the discussion and perhaps get the upper hand, the scholar asks the obvious question and Jesus takes it out of the scholar's hand and lays it on his heart.

A foreigner becomes the hero by helping the vulnerable person. The two religious figures, did not even have compassion enough to stop and see if he were still alive and in need of help. Jesus is telling this story to move from the Law to the Good News. The good news of the parable has several aspects.

The two who pass by on the "opposite side" have their religious reasons. Their being faithful to their understanding of the laws of physical purity is righteous in their eyes. The good news of Jesus expressed in the parable is that "unlawful" love of the injured is the new and complete righteousness. Keeping our eyes and hearts open to the robbed is more blessed than keeping our eyes on keeping legal strictures. A foreigner is

moved with compassion flowing from his head and heart. Jesus is the compassionate stranger to our fallen, robbed-of-innocence humanity. Jesus is on “our side” and takes us in to the “inn” of His embrace after tending to our wounds through the Sacraments.

The good news is that when we are relieved from our wondering what exactly are we to do when healed and sent back on our journeys. We are to “Go and do likewise.” Selfishness in its various forms of protection, personal image, and indulgence, are very close to our minds and hearts. This interior law is not so far away or high above us. We do not need anybody to teach us how to be greedy, egocentric, or lazy.

As Christians we are invited not to be like the priest, neither the Levite, but like the Samaritan, able to act out of kindness and generosity towards others even if they are not of our tribe, nationality, race and religion. Hence we shall overcome any religious or social discrimination. Have we understood this? Let us do likewise and with love we will win heaven.

Nesterio Ntiwa, OCD

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

17-07-2016



Gen. 18:1-10

Col.1:24-28

Lk 10:38-42

Communication of the members of the family must be direct and clear, open and honest. Parents are encouraged to talk with their children, even from their earliest days. Adolescence needs more to be listened to because they may be communicating more with their actions; they need understanding. In some families there is no direct line to reach the father. One has to pass through the mother. This is detrimental for the growth of the family for no member should be feared that one cannot communicate directly. The family is not the barracks where people relate with ranks. It is in an open environment that people can come to know each other and begin to connect with each other.

Self-expression does not mean simply giving vent to one’s frustrations and anger, saying what is going badly. It also means sharing our deep motivations and expectations, saying what we live for as a family. It doesn’t that we will always agree, but that we share with one another as a unit, as a connected group.

The main goal of communication in the family is not resolution but revelation. Communication gives the family members to reveal themselves and often it is in this revelation of what they perceive, think, feel, and need that they find resolution of a problem.

All members of the family must participate. The family atmosphere must proclaim that all have permission to speak and to say what they think, feel, or need. It is in this type of family communication that family members learn the skills of talking with one another and the art of listening. In such atmosphere, people learn emotional connectedness and experience family intimacy when they share, on the deepest levels, their pain, joy, sorrows, affection, anger, fears, regrets, failures, and successes. Family members learn to live with disagreements, different opinions, and personality differences. You learn to accept that in the same family one can be Bullets football team supporter or Silver football team supporter. You can even live a happy family with different political affiliations.

jubilee celebrations they lived healthy until after that particular celebration. Positive beliefs shape us positively and negative beliefs negatively. We become what we believe or look forward to. The false and negative beliefs have a life-crippling and life-denying effect on us. They ought to be either corrected or replaced by positive beliefs. In medical treatment, research has proved that positive religious beliefs accelerate the healing process. In 1996 a study in America revealed that 99% of some 269 doctors affirmed that besides their medical treatment, ‘a religious belief’ contributed to their healing process in their patients; 63% of the doctors even believed that ‘God intervened’ in their treatment and facilitated healing (Readers Digest, November 1999, 103-106).

....to be continued in the next issue

Isaac Mpokwe, OCD



THE VITALITY OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IN THE FAMILY

The family is the place where all members feel to be themselves and have the confidence to openly say what they think and feel. Members of the family need to talk to each other. Parents’ communication with each other is not only essential for their relationship; it serves as an example for their children. Communication brings about family connectedness and awareness.

Message for the Liturgy

Christian life is holistic. It includes all aspects of human life. As Christians we should live a life worth our calling. This shall include cooperating with others in society and also focusing on the One we are serving. We should do this while acknowledging that there are different ways of living Christian life. However, at the bottom of them all is prayer and service. These two are supposed to be embraced in all Christian vocations.

For the Homily

Abraham was generally a generous and a hospitable man. He even received and cared for the visitors whom he had not known. Thus, before telling him what they came for, he was already in action, serving the strangers. He had the sense of humanity, not only was he religious and faithful to God, but he was compassionate as well to others. Unknowingly, he welcomed the Lord who later revealed His mission – good news about Isaac’s birth. He would have a boy child the following year.

Mary and Martha, sisters of Lazarus, did the same thing to the Lord. But their hospitality differed. Martha just welcomed Him and went for house work. Mary listened to the visitor. No one was wrong between the two. The problem comes in when Martha complained to Jesus, “Lord do you not care...?” (Lk 10:40). She thought that her actions (welcoming Jesus and doing house work) were better than that of her sister (simply chatting with the Lord). To this complaint, Jesus said that Mary was the one who had chosen the better part (hospitality).

The passages of the two readings have one common element: hospitality (friendliness) to the Lord or how to welcome the Lord. Mt. 25:35-36 is telling us when to welcome Him”. We are called to be compassionate with each other by seeing each other as real children of the one Lord. No one should be treated as a stranger. In doing so, we are serving the

Lord. The Lord can be found in those who need our help.

However, of high importance should be the one goal that any other service has, pleasing the Lord. Thus, in our midst, we have different approaches to the Christian life. This understanding brings us to what we commonly call Christian vocations. No one should claim that their vocation is better than that of others. We are all serving the one Lord and God. What is needed is to remain faithful to our vocation. No wonder, St Paul is saying that the only aspect we should never discard in our life is Christ Himself. He is the centre of all that we do and is the reason for what we do.

We should ask the Lord for advice about how to serve Him. Thus, after doing some service, we need not forget to have a personal heart-to-heart conversation with the One we are serving. On top of all vocations and activities is prayer. Prayer should refresh us. Being with the Lord is the best moment for all Christians, as Mary did. This however, does not mean ignoring the aspect of service. In fact prayer and service are but two sides of the same coin.

Emmanuel Chimombo, OCD

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time

24-07-2016

Gen.18:20-32

Col.2:12-14

Lk 11:1-13

Message of the Liturgy

In our life we often pray so that something will change. We pray for a healing, reconciliation, deliverance and many more. But above all we

and total well-being.

Awareness that we are hurt and wounded

Once relaxed, it is important to recall the painful facts as they happened with a balanced and restful mind. A truthful understanding of the facts is to be achieved. Acceptance of one's brokenness begins to set one free and healed. Bringing the painful facts before the conscious mind and learning to dissociate oneself from the negative and painful sensations sets the way to healing. We have to learn to observe our own feelings from the outside.

In facing the contradiction that we ourselves are, we become living icons of accepting the mercy of God. Once you can accept mercy, it is almost natural to hand it on others (c.f. the story of the unforgiving debtor in Matt. 18:23-35). You become a conduit of what you yourself have received. Great love has the potential to open the heart space and the mind space if we accept our brokenness.

Warm loving relationships

Warm loving relationships once established, have the power to heal us of many diseases. Healing is re-establishing our connectedness and relatedness. Many examples could be given where the sick, the uncared for and the unloved are loved and lovingly taken care of and they have become whole and hearty. You can't expect healing to take place quickly when the wounded is surrounded by the judgmental and resentful people. It is greater love of God and neighbour which can dissolve our brokenness.

Positive thinking and beliefs

I have seen people very sick but because the upcoming of the son's or daughter's wedding, profession, priesthood or even their own



REFLECTIONS

Continuation...

Entering into a healing process

The need to relax

Most of our pain and suffering comes from restlessness and wondering of the mind, which speculates on various real or unreal situations and circumstances. It is about our past and the future that leads to more brooding, depression, anger, resentment and withdrawal. The body, mind and spirit is one whole and any disturbance in anyone of the three the whole person is disturbed. Total harmony is the root of all healing, which is empowerment and integration in a person's life.

Therefore if healing has to begin, it is important that the person is fully at rest. Today, there are many ways of putting the body at rest i.e. breathing exercises, meditation, yoga, awareness of sounds and so on. If the body, mind and spirit are all at rest, the whole person is at rest. Then the person experiences harmony

pray In order to become saints. That's what it means to have an intense relationship with God. Prayer is indeed necessary but it's not easy for we do not know how to pray as we ought. God does not want us to pray superficially. Due to this he has sent us his Son to teach us how to pray.

For the Homily

Prayer is the way we live our relationship with God. Being in union with God surely we will lack nothing. To pray as Christians means to pray "Our Father" though to some the use of image of God as the father can be a stumbling block basing from the experience of the earthly fathers who have failed to pray their role as provider, teacher, guardian and in one way or another have not tried to show love to their children. But we have to know that God's fatherhood transcends the idea of the created world and God is above us and Almighty. It is after having a clear notion of who God is that we can pray better. God as Our Father is so close to us and giving Him time in all our situations is a first step to enter his kingdom.

Whenever we pray the Lord's prayer, we acknowledge God's name hallowed (Mt 6:9), that is to say holy. When we call upon his holy name we must be prepared to approach him as our Father. This is why we must never take His name in vain (Ex 20:7). On the other hand when we call upon his name, we should remember the special relationship God has with us. In regard to our daily life we are invited to have for God's Kingdom. Let us not be carried away by the different kingdoms around us, such as the kingdom of money, power, sex just to mention a few. It is only the Kingdom of God that gives security.

To be a man of prayer is to let God's will be done. Giving up your will means letting God take the lead of our lives because he can not disappoint us. The prayer that Jesus is teaching us brings fulfillment in our life. Makes us to depend on God and stand firm in our faith. When we

pray, our relationship with our neighbour will be improved. Let's not be self centered in prayer but rather include others even those who hate us. As Christians we should always persist and persevere in prayer. Let us give God time and we shall enjoy his presence in our life hence we shall be changed.

Patrick Daliken, OCD

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

31-07-2016

Ecc. 1:2; 2:21-23

Col. 3:1-5, 9-11

Lk. 12:13-21

Message for the Liturgy

Have you ever noticed that our pursuit for wealth is usually motivated by worry? Worries only propel us to strive to accumulate abundant possessions. This is exactly the reason our Lord is admonishing us to be alert and contented with what we have for in that way we avoid oppressing others.

For the Homily

In today's Gospel Jesus is teaching about the impact of fear and anxiety in our lives. The man in the Gospel was thinking about his inheritance yet our Lord goes beyond the material realm and tries to nourish his soul. Here we cannot say that Christ did not have the authority to judge, but all he wanted was to let the man know that his interest was in creating a peaceful environment between the man and God rather than the

on earth was a waste of opportunities. A life with eyes and ears but not able to see and hear those suffering close to him. Unfortunately, it is too late to undo anything else. Things have already fallen apart. It is too late to reclaim the time lost. Neither can he use Lazarus to warn his brothers and sisters. Time lost never gained."

This mostly happens to us today. We feel so absorbed in our comfortable zone that we pretend not to see. We pretend not to see those suffering close to us. We pretend not to see that in a certain angle of the world they are people looking even for our very small help. We close our eyes in order not to see the sick and the dying. We close our ears and pretend not to hear the poor who beg us in street, not to hear the prisoners, not to hear those who ask us for mercy etc. So this parable today invites us to live our present very well. It helps us to realise and avoid the mistake of thinking that there is still time. If we have life and opportunities, let's start living and living well. The words of God in the bible are always our guide to this. It is well said that who has little charity sees few poor people, who has much of charity sees many poor people, but he who has no charity sees no one as poor.

The first and second readings are a compliment to this. In the second reading, Paul exhorts Timothy to stay faithful to God in all things. "Fight the good fight of the faith and win for yourself the eternal life to which you were called." There is no good fight of the faith apart from the fight of charity for the poor and the needy. And in the first reading, Prophet Amos gives a severe warning to those who disregard the grid of the poor and do not care about the ruin of them. He puts it categorically that they will be the first to be exiled. Indeed, as today's responsorial psalm says, "Happy are those who find solace in God, the help of the poor."

Stephano Kamwaza, OCD

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

25-09-2016

Amos 6:1, 4-7

1Tim: 6:11-16

Lk: 16:19-31

Message of the Liturgy

The major theme in today's readings is the importance of the care of the poor in the life of discipleship.

For the homily

The readings of today remind us not to forget the essential things in life. Certainly, the rich man was not a sinner because of his riches. In the same line, it might be concluded that the poor Lazarus was not happy of his miserable life on earth. The problem of the rich man is that he was so immersed in his earthly treasures to the point of forgetting the fundamental things in life, among which, love and care for the needy. He buried himself in his riches to the point of not seeing the poor and mendicant Lazarus. Probably the rich man did not even see Lazarus, or pretended not to see him when he was on earth. But at a certain point, the rich man sees Lazarus. He sees him when it is his turn to languish in the pain of hell. The torture and torment of hell have opened his eyes and now he sees and understands very well. He understands now that his life

man and his brother. Knowing the danger of the man's intentions and the consequence, Christ warns us that our focus should be on getting heavenly or spiritual treasures rather than material wealth which is not lasting. This shows that we have the plans in our daily lives but all we have to realize is that God is that one who has the last say in all that we do. Hence it follows then, that if our relationship with God is good we are secured and have nothing to worry about.

Fear arouses desire which most of the time impels us to covet other people's possessions. The end result is that we become weary and restless planning the ways of accumulating wealth of which not all we acquire by the just means and in so doing we profane God's name as Christians created in his image. This is the reason Christ is warning us to be alert against any unholy desires. The striking thing with the act of desiring is that it takes much of one's time and instead of striving for heavenly riches we get ourselves entangled with vain hope in material riches. Just as we all know that the object of desire is goodness, then by accumulating material wealth we clearly stress that it is better than the heavenly riches and in so doing we separate ourselves from the Lord. It is therefore not wrong to concur with St John of the Cross when he said that when a person loves something he identifies himself with that particular thing. Therefore, each time we accumulate earthly goods we reduce ourselves to only earthly creatures.

Earthly life is good but the afterlife is much better. This is a call for us to live a virtuous life so as to be glorified in Christ. To achieve that we need to store our treasure in heaven and not here on earth where the moth can spoil anytime (Matt.6:19-20). Let us be reminded that our life is not given to us for the pursuit of an abundance of possessions, but rather our possessions have been given to us for the pursuit of God. Our concern for worldly riches deride our focus on God who is the source of all that we enjoy and that which we are to enjoy if we live a holy life here on earth. Let us make a prudent choice and not to be like the foolish man

who opted for what is perishable and in the end found himself losing everything. Furthermore today's Gospel invites us to be generous to the poor and marginalized.

Just as St Augustine had pointed out that the bellies of the poor are much safer storerooms than our innovative barns, let us extend hands to our brothers and sisters in need so that the glory of God is seen through us. The Christian world view tells us that since our life belongs to God, we should not strive to be rich with earthly things, but strive to be rich in God. God is not impressed with our cars and money but our attitude towards the poor.

Paul Chitende, OCD

19th Sunday in Ordinary Time

07.08.2016

Wis.18:6-9
Hebr.11:1-2.8-19
Lk 12:32-48

Message of the Liturgy

None of us enjoy being told about death and the end of life. This is because by nature we fight for self-preservation and more days of life. Yet the underlining message we get in our reading today challenges this tendency and goes on to invite us on this inevitable fact of the end of life and what lies ahead. More also the gospel present the message that is unpopular in today's world. While people are talking of progress, development and the acquiring of wealth, the word of God is calling us to look at wealth in a new perspective.

and the world is divided into 1st, 2nd and 3rd world. The irony is that this happens under the nose of over a billion Christians in the world; making it clear that the values of common good, sharing, compassion and charity have been abandoned. Insatiable appetite for wealth, selfishness, greed and spirit of accumulation has overpowered us. Wealth and the power that accompanies it, is idolized; the common feeling is to get wealth at all cost, by hook or by trick, the end now justifies the means and the increased cases of ritual killings of albinos and the "cash gate spirit" tearing apart our already ailing economy speak volumes of how we have derailed from the Christian path.

It is in this vein that the gospel confronts us with an astute steward. Jesus does not praise the steward for his dishonesty rather he is praised for his shrewdness and foresight. Similarly, our wealth and possessions should be at the service of the poor; we should serve the less privileged with a great deal of humility, compassion and charity. We ought to devote ourselves to working for riches that last eternity. Being rich is not a curse but a blessing as mere stewards of God's wealth and never owners of what we possess. We ought to be inspired by the Jewish thought: "**man's wealth consist not in what he kept, but in what he gave away**". Astuteness and shrewdness should be shown in helping the poor and not in exploiting them. Only if we gave much effort and concern to our souls as we do to our worldly affairs, what a world we would have!!! We cannot be slaves of two masters; we must serve God with single purpose, devotion, commitment and with exclusivity.

Sylvester Chasweka dp

tion that brings us the perfect joy that comes from God. We pray during this year of mercy, that we should be merciful just like our heavenly Father is merciful.

Muhwex Alex

25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

18-09-2016

Am 8:4-7

1Tim 2:1-8

Lk 16:1-13

Message of the Liturgy

The famous adage goes: “money makes the world go round”. Everything nowadays revolves around money and people’s best efforts are geared towards money making and they make sure nothing gets in their way. Christian values and God have been abandoned to satisfy this worldly spirit.

For the Homily

In the first reading, prophet Amos bemoans the worldly spirit rampant during the hay days of the kingdom of Israel. The prosperity in politics, religion and economy was achieved at the expense of the poor. Injustices and exploitation of the less privileged were the order of the day as evidenced by: cheating on weights and measures, tampering with scales, inflating value of goods etc.

Over 2000 years of Christianity, the situation is even worse; a fraction of the world’s population has a lion’s share of the world’s wealth, the chasm between the rich and the poor keeps on getting bigger and wider

For the Homily

The tantalizing prosperity gospels that are so prevalent in our society today promising miraculous money, riches, good health, good jobs and all the success one can dream of may mislead and divert us from our ultimate call. In the society today we have so many men and women of God who seem to give the impression that material prosperity is the measure of how closer one is to God. Consequently, the accumulation of wealth is seen as tantamount to being right with God. It comes as no surprise that the authenticity of God’s ministers today is measured by their capacity to make someone rich overnight. We are living in the days that success is considered according to one’s possession not on the quality of one’s life. This is indeed worrying.

Although it is true that God is the giver of riches as revealed in the life of Abraham, material prosperity is not an end in itself. Compared with the heavenly Kingdom, earthly wealth is ‘rubbish’. Is this not the reason the Lord calls us to sell everything and follow him?

It would be a misunderstanding here to conclude that the gospel reading today is advocating for a *kwathu sipadziko* (the world is not my home) spirituality. Of course the world is our home. It is God who is hosting us here. Paradoxically, we are waiting for the Kingdom that is already present though not in its fullness. However, our eyes ought to be fixed upon heaven.

The things that God has given us, the wealth and all the property that we have are given to us to use as means to reach the Kingdom of God. It is not a sin to be rich, but what we do or not do with our

wealth is what constitutes sin or righteousness.

In Malawi we have known the evils and ravages of poverty and it would be absurd to preach that material prosperity is evil. Surely, we know that development, innovation, entrepreneurship and wealth are essential to our country. In itself destitution is evil. Oftentimes poverty can lead one to sin by cursing God or even venturing into immoral means of acquiring sustenance. Conversely, earthly treasures have the potential to take us away from God if we fix all our attention on them. The fundamental thing that God requires of us is to use our means to help the disadvantaged – those living on the margins of the society. This is the Christian way of using riches.

If it is acknowledged that the little comforts that we enjoy here on earth are only transitory then we will look forward with determination to the greater happiness that God has prepared for us in eternity. Faith in Jesus' promises make us certain that what he told us although we have not yet seen is true. Abram is the great example of this deep trust in God. He was able to move out of his country of Ur of the Chaldees into the unknown land of Canaan. He had to abandon his people and all that he had in order to follow the way that the Lord was leading him. This gives us the dependability of God. He fulfills his promises.

As recipients of these promises of God we are called to trust and follow his teaching in order to be with him in his heavenly Kingdom. We are moving towards the heavenly city. This earthly pilgrimage as Jesus teaches us in the gospel requires vigilance and constancy in faith. There is a danger of falling into complacency because everything in our life seems so normal and good espe-

ing merciful includes forgiving others, as we see in all the three readings of today. The invitation is, "Be merciful, just as your heavenly Father is merciful" (Lk 6:36).

For the homily

God has always been merciful to us despite our sinfulness. When we reflect on the story of the prodigal son, we come to understand the patience, love, hope, and mercy of the father. He had always thought of his lost son and as soon as he sees him still far off, he runs out to meet him and embraces him with tenderness, without word of reproach: he has returned! And that is the joy of the Father. God is always waiting for us, he never grows tired. Jesus shows us the merciful patience of God so that we can always do likewise to our brothers and sisters. Mercy is presented as a force that overcomes everything, filling the heart with perfect love and bringing consolation through pardon, and consequently healing our troubled hearts.

Jesus is waiting for us to embrace us and to pardon us. We should not be afraid. We should take heart, and courage to come close to him, for his arms are already open to receive us. We have all sinned, but the most vital thing is to acknowledge our sinfulness and have a new beginning.

Let us be vigilant and see the misery of the world, the pains and sorrows of our brothers and sisters which reflect a face of the suffering Christ. May we reach out to them and support them so that they can experience our friendship, and our care. May their sorrows and pain be ours too. May we move away from selfishness and think even of our brothers and sisters and let us enter more deeply into the heart of the Gospel where the poor have a special place of the perfect mercy of God.

During this year of mercy we are called to show mercy because mercy has first been shown to us. Pardoning offences becomes the clearest expression of merciful love, and for us Christians it is actually an obliga-

allowing corruption in my work and business.

Jesus is inviting us to crucify our habits that do not conform to his teaching. As Christians we have to act as if we hated our loved ones whenever our claims are in conflict with the claims of the Gospel. Jesus demands a total and undivided alliance and commitment. Not even love of father and mother is an excuse; thus his demand: “anyone who does not carry his/her cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.”

There are times when our cross becomes heavy, difficult to carry, times when our best friends betray us, times when people destroy our good name, and so many other instances in daily life. We must be strong and ready to face these kinds of situation.

This is the teaching of today’s gospel, the cost of being a follower of Christ. We have to do everything for Christ’s sake since he carried a heavy cross before us.

Emmanuel Kasaukani Chikaya, OCD

24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

11-09-2016

Ex 32:7-11.13-14

1Tim 1:12-17

Lk 15:1-32

Message for the Liturgy

The readings today want us to celebrate God’s mercy. Mercy is an act of love by which we care for the bodily and spiritual needs of others. Be-

cially when we are enjoying some kind of material prosperity. The irony of life is that although we try to convince ourselves that things are looking good but we have so many examples where death has come to our loved ones so unexpected and sudden. Maybe this is good reason for us to get prepared all the time for we do not know the hour of the master’s return.

Deacon Damiano Gabriel, CSSp

20th Sunday in Ordinary Time

14-08-2016

Jer.38:4-6, 8-18

Hebr.12:1-4

Lk12:49-53

Message for the Liturgy

Jeremiah is punished for criticizing the wealthy for their being corrupt and unjust to the poor. Let us be courageous enough to speak and stand for the truth in our lives as Christians. In the Second reading we are invited to persevere in running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus. In the Gospel today Jesus states that he has come not only to bring peace but also division. He has come to bring fire that purifies and saves.

For the Homily

The first reading Jer. 38:4-6.8-10: The city of Jerusalem was being besieged by Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon. The people were dying of hunger. Though the Babylonian army was stronger, the army com-

mander of Zedekiah, continued resisting to give in. Unfortunately, King Zedekiah was not courageous enough to challenge his army officers to accept defeat. Often times we too, are not courageous enough to correct, challenge, and enlighten each other as Christians. This happens under fear due to the position, economic stamina of a friend on the wrong or the influence the individual on the wrong has in our community. Consequently, we lose our integrity, painted bad, prove irresponsible leaders by victimizing the innocent people who rely on us as their leaders. Let us always be brave enough by doing the right things in different capacity we hold and realizing that God is with us, and we are doing the will of God. Therefore, we are invited to emulate prophet Jeremiah who spoke out, telling the King and the army that it is worthless to continue fighting. Also Elbed-Melech, courageously spoke out against the wrong things happening. Yes, it costed him a lot by being tortured, but since he knew his responsibility, he had faith in God, he did not give in to the oppressors. He was ready to suffer justly for the right course, for the salvation of the innocent souls by doing the will of God. King Zedekiah gave the directive to imprison prophet Jeremiah. In actual fact, he was only afraid of being told the truth. Always, when we are told the truth, it pains, but the prudent way of looking at it, should be an inner examination if that is true of me. Then without pride, prejudice, and in honesty of heart take it for my personal transformation to be a better Christian. Jeremiah was saved not because he took side with the mighty and powerful, but stood for what was right and just. Other upright people saw that he was unjustly treated and came to his rescue. In our lives, then let's stand for the truth, though the powerful and those who think they are on the right will not understand us, but so long as we are guided by God, one day they will realize their weaknesses and change for the better. For the Lord does not abandon his or her innocent servants to suffer forever.

23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

04-09-2016

Wis.9:13-18
Phlm 9b:10.12-17
Lk 14:25-33

The Message of the Liturgy

- ◆ To follow Jesus calls for a complete change in our attitudes towards people and material goods.
- ◆ Love endures for ever
- ◆ Wisdom gives guidance and instruction in the ways of God and so leads to salvation.

For the Homily

Jesus, in today's gospel, gives us two examples, the one of a builder, and that of a king leaving for war. Both have the very same messages and both challenges us today.

Do we take time for reflection? Do we sit down and plan ahead before we do something? It is wise to ask ourselves: do I have that what is required to achieve my intended goal? Will I be able to finish the project I am about to start? These questions were not addressed to a builder neither to the king, Jesus was preaching to the people, and these questions were addressed to them 2016 years ago. They are being addressed to us today.

The cost of being a follower, a disciple of Jesus is demanding since it demands us to do things we don't like to do and give up things we like. It demands us to leave our ways of life that are not pleasing for God and confirm our daily lives to the teaching of the Gospel: being unfaithful to my wife/husband, drinking heavily, stealing, not caring for my family,

the proud and exalts the humble (James 4:6).

On the other hand Jesus knows that the host had invited his guests for two reasons: (1) to pay them back because they had invited him to past feasts, or (2) to put them under his debt so that they would invite him to future feasts. Such hospitality was not an expression of love and grace but rather an evidence of pride and selfishness. He was “buying” recognition. In proposing this mode of relationship, Jesus does not prohibit us from entertaining family and friends, but he warns us against entertaining only family and friends exclusively and habitually. The kind of “fellowship” quickly degenerates into “mutual admiration society” in which each one tries to outdo the other and no one dares to break the cycle. Sad to say, too much church social life fits this description.

Our motive for sharing must be the praise of God and not the applause of men, the eternal reward in heaven and not the temporary recognition on earth. In our Lord’s time, it was not considered proper to ask poor people and handicapped people to public banquets, women were not invited either, but Jesus commanded us to put these needy people at the top of our guest list because they cannot pay us back. If our hearts are right, God will see to it that we are properly rewarded, though getting a reward must not be the motive for our generosity. When we serve others from unselfish hearts, we are laying up treasures in heaven (Matt. 6:10) and becoming “rich toward God”(Lk 12:22). This is the meaning and motive of spirituality of humility. *“To be taken with love for a soul, God does not look upon its greatness but upon the greatness of its humility”* (Maxims of love, St John of the Cross).

John Paul Nampota, OCD

The second reading Hebrew 12: 1-4: This part of the letter to the Hebrews is a continuation of last Sundays reading. These Christians wants to leave their Christian faith because of the problems they are facing. Soon after their conversion, they have been attacked and their property stolen while others were being imprisoned. It is clear that they are not free people, they have fear, and their lives are in danger too. Hence the invitation to show their faith, love and trust in God in this difficult time: run as athletes, proving their faith before important people. All of us must live our Christian faith all days despite the daily problems, trials, temptations, intimidations, discouragements, to attain the crown of glory after our earthly life in Heaven.

Therefore, for us to have a safe journey towards our savoir, we need to be free from sin, pure in heart. Yes, we are human beings who fail many times, but as Christians , above all Catholic Christians we have the chance of purifying ourselves through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Let us be conscious enough of our spiritual status and when we find ourselves not worthy before God we should seek the graces of God in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Let us be ever conscious of the people we leave with, those who are instrumental for our spiritual growth, let us love them and journey with them. On the other hand, being aware of those who are there for our downfall in our Christian life. We should pray for them and love them.

The Gospel Luke 12:49-53: During the time of Jesus the world seemed full of evil. The people of that time thought it wise to have the purifying fire to clear the evil prevailing at that time among them. Before the coming of Jesus, Some prophets had announced the coming of fire, one of them was prophet Zephaniah1:18;3:8. This purifying fire which was announced by the prophets was brought by Jesus Christ. It is the fire that purifies and saves humanity. This fire is Jesus own word he taught, the message of salvation, his Spirit, and the very Spirit that came upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost in the form of flames of fire Acts.

2:3-11.

The message of Jesus is fire because it shakes many people hence causing divisions. The fire brought by Jesus on earth brings justice, renews the understanding of God in Human hearts and lives, brings love, peace, grace and rejection of old dark patterns of life. This results into tension in the hearts of many, for it is like a double edged sword that cuts the most precious and valued habits, behavior, businesses, works, offices of people. Jesus message is full of truth and challenges us all. But we fail to stand Jesus not that he is too tough on us, but we are over burdened with evil where we realize our richness, pleasure, joy, recognition. Christ today invites us to open our hearts at allow him purify us and saves us. Just as our friends realized their times, the social set up. We too, are invited to know our times and be able to translate into practical life the signs of our times. Let us settle our personal and spiritual problems while still active and health before the just judge comes, Jesus Christ.

It is good to be reminded once in a while that the decision to do the right thing, the good thing, is not always easy and without conflict. Jesus himself did not make easy decisions and avoid conflict. In today's reading, he reminds his followers to be prepared for difficult decisions and conflict as well. Let us pray for God's grace of courage, as we journey here on earth waiting for his second coming that he should find us pure worthy being of eternal salvation.

Goodrich Mughogho, OFM

blessings and birthright. God is there, of course, and so are the Old Testament saints "*spirits of just men made perfect*". Jesus Christ the mediator is there, the one who shed his blood for us. We learned that Abel is still speaking (Heb 11:4); and here we discover that Christ's blood speaks "*better things than that of Abel*" (Heb 12:24). Abel's blood spoke from the earth and cried Justice (Gen 4:10), while Christ's blood speaks from heaven and announces mercy for sinners. Abel's blood made Cain feel guilty (and rightly so) and drove him away in despair (Gen 4:13-15; but Christ's blood frees us from guilt and has opened the way into the presence of God. Were it not for the blood of the New Covenant, we could not enter the heavenly city! We are called today to examine this relationship of loving humility that forms God's kingdom and try to live it and make it a reality where we live.

The Gospel offers example ground on which humility in relationship should survive. Experts in management tells us that most people wear an invisible sign that leads, "*Please make me feel important*"; if we heed that sign, we can succeed in human relations. In Jesus' day, as today, there were "status symbols" that helped people enhance and protect their standing in society. If you were invited to the "right homes" and if you were seated in the "right place" the people would know how important you really were. The emphasis was on reputation, not character. It was more important to sit in the right places than to live the right kind of life.

When Jesus advised the guests to take the lowest places, He was not proposing to them an exaggerated and false humility. The false humility that takes the lowest place is just as hateful to God as the pride that takes the highest place, but Jesus is proposing a spirituality of humility that we modestly estimate our worth, and submit to others and God. God is not impressed by our status in the society or in the church. He is not influenced by what people say or think about us, because He sees the thoughts and motives of the heart (1Sam 16:7). God still humbles

some wisdom that says that love diminishes the lover to the loved object. It is in this right that great saints of the ages have defined humility as *“a quality by which a person considering his own defects has a lowly opinion of himself and willingly submits himself to God and others for God’s sake”* (St Augustine) and St Bernard define humility as: *“A virtue by which a man knowing himself as he truly is, abases himself.”* Therefore, in the first reading it is being proposed to us humility as a way to God, *“humble yourself the more, the greater you are, and you will find favour with God”* A virtuous person that is what every Christian ought to be today, while seeking self promotion, has to have today’s words of wisdom as a rule or measure to one’s conduct. What is sublime for you, seek not, into the things beyond your strength search not. This is in the keeping of the wisdom found in the teaching of St Thomas on the virtue of humility when he said humility *“consists in keeping oneself within one’s own bounds, not reaching out to things above one, but admitting to one’s superiors”*.

The second reading helps us to enter into the spirituality of humility manifested in the whole philosophy of life in Jesus. The writer of the Hebrews contrasts Mt. Sinai and the giving of the law with the heavenly Mt Zion and the blessings of grace in the church. He describes the solemnity and even the terror that were involved in the giving of the law (Heb 12:18-21).

What a relief is to move from Mt. Sinai to Mt. Zion. Mt Sinai represents the Old Covenant of Law, and Mt. Zion represents the New Covenant of grace in Jesus Christ, the grace that expresses itself with utter humility. The heavenly city is God’s Mt. Zion. In this city the citizen live together in equality of humility. The “citizen” make up the population of this city are the innumerable angels. The church is there, the believers have their citizenship in heaven (Phil 3:20) and their names are written in heaven (Lk 10:20). “Firstborn” is a title of dignity and rank. Esau was actually Isaac’s firstborn, but he rejected his privileges and lost his

21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

21-08-2016

Is 66:18-21

Heb 12:5-7, 11-18

Lk 13:22-30

Message for the Liturgy

Today’s liturgy reveals to all of us the universal character of our religion. The history of religions all over the world has its ‘blood shed’ pages. Millions of people were and are being massacred because of faith-s. Religions should unfold themselves so that there is inter faith relationships, that everyone although shares different faiths is saved and taste the heavenly bliss because of values, the narrow gate spirituality that they have.

For the homily

It is good to reflect this question: will Jesus be happy when His mere name being preached everywhere? Or will Jesus be happy when his values are lived faithfully and yet the name of Jesus is not merely preached? Everyone would accept without any hesitant Jesus will be happy when His values (gospel values) are lived and not when mere name is preached. Jesus never wanted to establish a religion here on earth, rather He gave up his very life on the cross for a single purpose, the kingdom of God might be realized here on earth. Kingdom of God is nothing but in a simpler understanding ‘values like love, forgiveness, patience, perseverance, acceptance, mercy etc, rule the society where people experience God not only in the churches, temples and mosque, but also in their living areas. In Jesus’ words this way of living can be

called as 'narrow gate spirituality' as it is put in the gospel of today.

Jesus never escapes any questions shot before him. His way of answering the questions differ, sometimes with parables and other times direct and indirect. Once He was asked who my neighbour is. Then He preached and answered with the parable of Good Samaritan. Today's gospel is also a parable and an answer to the question asked to Jesus. Will those who are saved be few? This question gives us a very primitive understanding of Jewish religion. People of that time especially Jews believed that they are the ones to be saved and all the other would experience life after in eternal fire. Jesus, here breaks the conservative and very primitive understanding of religion. He opens up the new understanding of religion. He answers with the spirituality of narrow gate. And He finishes with these verses that 'and men will come from east and west, and from north and south and sit at table in the kingdom of God. That means religion may be a system or a way to experience the truth in its own way. But even apart from this system a man will be saved provided he or she be a man and woman in the kingdom of God or the ones who follow and live by values. And that is why Catholic Church from ecumenical point of view and from the teaching of the Vat II very much receptive to take the truths that are found in other religion. And thus paves a way for the Catholic Church to have universal character and to form a new people of God. In the first reading too we hear '... and I am coming to gather all the nations and tongues, and they shall come and shall see my glory...'

To experience the universal character of the Catholic Church one has to enter through the 'narrow gate.' Today we are in the fast growing scientific world, in which the modern generation having exposed them too much in the mass Medias and new applications in the computer world, has the culture of living 'anyhow.' To discipline one with the values is rather very difficult. Or to have a culture of living 'this is how' becomes not reachable. To bring God into the living rooms of modern society

rather demands more sacrifices and willingness to enter. For us, the people of third millennium it is really a narrow gate. All those discipline themselves to enter through this narrow gate wins the life and be saved. Let this Holy Eucharist that we offer bring the narrow gate closer, that we may enter with the help of value based lives.

Antony Rajan, OCD

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

28-08-2016

Sir. 3:19-21, 30-31
Hebr.12:18-19, 22-24
Lk.14:1.7-14

Message for the Liturgy

Humility in a higher and ethical service is that by which a man or woman has a modest estimate of his own worth, and submits himself to others and God. According to this meaning no one can humiliate another, but only oneself, and this can only be done properly when aided by Divine grace. This is the virtue of humility.

For the homily

First highlights the advantages accompanying the virtue of humility. Humility brings one in close contact with others, hence we hear today, "*conduct yourself with humility and you will be loved more*". It is in humility that a person is or willingly can submit him/herself to others and make them subject to his/her love. As we may have already heard in