**14th Sunday of year c cycle homily 2016**

 **I made a visit to Beaumont Hospital this week. The man behind the desk really surprised. Usually they are hurried and very businesslike in their conversation. But this man was different.**

**The man was full of Joy:**

**“Good morning, Father. What can I do for you?”**

**“I am looking for Joe Cagle’s room.” Joe was in the hospital rehabbing from a heart attack and stroke.**

**The man behind the counter said he had been through a triple bypass operation himself.**

**He had gone through much suffering both physical and emotional, yet he was now full of joy.**

**He had risen from near death.**

**Now, as a volunteer at the hospital, he found his joy by serving others.**

**All of us are looking for joy in life.**

**Our world tells how to find joy this 4th of July Independence Day weekend.**

**It tells us all we need to do is E hot dogs, hamburgers, chicken**

**And drink: beer (hundreds of millions of dollars worth of beer each July 4); and wine.**

**All we need to do to find joy is find the right friends or parties or partners to share the day with.**

**While all these activities may bring us some pleasure and relaxation, they will not necessarily bring us joy because joy comes to us when we do two things:**

1. **when we thank God for the blessings of every day;**
2. **and when we serve others.**

**I saw this joy recently in the faces of the young people and their ad visors who participated in the Catholic Work Camp and came into our neighborhood to serve those in need. Last Thursday the 310 participants of the Catholic Work Camp gathered to share their experiences. A young man at the gathering came up to me and said he had been at our site last year and joyfully serving others had made a profound effect in his life.**

**As you may know, many of our members of our parish are going down South next week to serve those in need in the Reach Work Camp Mission Trip. Yes, they will suffer a bit. They give up a week of their lives and sleep on classroom floors. But joy will be theirs because they choose to serve others.**

**In today’s gospel, Jesus tells us the source of our joy. He told us:**

* **Live simply**
* **Bring the gift of peace**
* **Cure the sick**

**Jesus tells us, “Do not rejoice in what you accomplish**

**But rejoice in that your names are written in heaven.”**

**Rejoice in the fact that you have found the secret of life.**

**In spite of whatever suffering you are facing,**

**True joy is found in giving thanks and in serving others.**

**IN today’s gospel when the disciples return from their mission trip, he sits them down and talks with them about what they have just experienced: not everyone they encounter have welcomed them; not all the sick were cured; not all the spirits of the depressed were raised up.**

**It reminds me about our neighborhood:**

**Not every abandoned house is boarded up;**

**Not every pile of debris is picked up;**

**Not all neighbors are happy we are working to improve things.**

**Isn’t it the same with our families or at work? Not everything in life gets fixed.**

**But in the end, it is not that important on HOW MUCH HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED. What matters is that we, who have been blessed by God, have served others in his name. For that reason our names are already written in heaven.**

**Jesus reminds us of a common temptation:**

**We can try to fix the world and get worn out in the process.**

**Then we can depressed and discouraged because we do not meet the expectation of ourselves or others.**

**He suggests rather that we should take time each day, and especially each Sabbath, to gratefully recall how much the Lord has blessed us and then with the joy and peace which comes from knowing it, go out and serve in his name.**

**My brothers and sisters, the harvest is rich but the laborers with joyful hearts who humbly serve are few. No matter what we are involved in this coming week, let us humbly and gratefully add our energy and efforts to help establish the Kingdom of God.**