

13th Sunday A Cycle 7-2-17

Matthew's gospel is composed of five sermons; today's gospel passage is the end of the 2nd sermon addressed to the disciples who are being sent on mission to preach; teach; heal.

We too at Corpus Christi are, in the words of Pope Francis, a joyful band of missionary disciples. We are sent to announce the Good News in word and deed.

If you look at our community we are a very diverse lot;

- **we have members born in 15 countries;**
- **a large number of us come from four closed or merged parishes;**
- **our members come from as far as 30 miles away to join in prayer.**
- **Just yesterday five of us gathered to install of the 5th Little Free in our neighborhood. One of us was adult single person, a religious sister, a person who had gone through a very difficult marriage, a man married over fifty years, and a priest. That crew represented the diversity of who we are at Corpus Christ.**

Yet, ALL of us have one thing in common; we are all hardwired for God. There is a God-drive that has to be respected in each person.

The challenge for us who are hardwired for God is that we are also hardwired for physical things like food, drink, air, sex.

We also are hardwired for social needs like shelter, family, health care, to be in control rather than to be controlled.

The problem is that we are hardwired to some many things. It is difficult to find the right ordering of our drives.

When we get the wrong ordering of our hardwiring we can mess up our priorities, we can fall into idolatry. For instance, when we get attached to money, or social status or even food or sex,/ when they become our first priority, we are asking finite reality, something that will not last, to bring us ultimate happiness, something which only our God-drive can give to us. When we put our God-drive first, everything else falls into perspective. The goods of social and physical life can give us passing fulfillment, but they cannot satisfy our hunger for the divine.

**That is exactly what Jesus is trying to tell us in the gospel: Jesus says
“Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me;
whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me;
whoever loves children or parents more than me, cannot be my
disciple.**

**Recently I had the privilege of preaching at my sister’s mass of
resurrection. My sister had 12 children; They all turned out uniquely
different... all the way to one being a full time pastoral minister at a
Catholic Church to one being strung out on alcohol. She has given her
life for them. In the end, she needed to hand them over to the Lord.
Family can drain our spiritual energy. But my sister did not allow even
her children be more important than her relationship with the Lord.**

**Yes, Jesus tells us that we who are his band of joyful missionary
disciples have a different starting point than many people in our
secular world. Our secular world tries to tell us that living in a certain
part of town,
driving a certain kind of vehicle,
wearing a certain set of clothes,
indulging in a certain pleasure will bring us ultimate satisfaction**

But, often the hard way, we find out that they don't. We may experience momentary pleasures, but they pass because they will not bring us ultimate pleasure. Surely the addiction that many people have to opiates today is a sign of many in our society seeking ultimate happiness from the wrong source. That is why Jesus tells us in today's gospel to get our priorities into order.

In the second part of today's gospel passage Jesus invites us to enter fully into the life of the Trinity by immersing ourselves into the community of the people of God. We are to be a joyful band of missionary disciples. We all know that we are surely far from perfect, but we all admit that our ultimate hardwire is to God.

And so we gather today to form a community where we live out that common life:

We welcome a prophet

We invite a righteous man and woman

We make room for the immigrant and orphan

We give a cup of water to these little ones.

Ultimately, here is the message of today's gospel: God has hard-wired us for greatness.

And we are sent to share the good news that everyone, the least to the greatest, that they are hard-wired for greatness. too.