

15th Sunday in Ordinary Time (7/12/09)

Today's readings remind us again of the mission of prophets and apostles to proclaim the "Good News" of God's love for us. There will always be special people God calls to proclaim His works but as our Baptism reminds us we are all called to be "priest, prophet and king" for Christ. That is, we are all called to exercise the ministry of priest, by offering the sacrifice of our lives back to God; of prophet, by proclaiming God's love and the need for our repentance; of king, by exercising leadership to bring about God's rule of justice on the earth.

God entrusts all creation to us. To be more specific, He entrusts us with the families, the relationships and work we are all engaged in. Every situation we find ourselves in God encourages us to proclaim His Kingship through our prophetic lives. Have you ever thought of your daily work as a proclamation of the Kingdom? It is, or it should be. We are invited to live our lives as if we are proclaiming the gospel in every aspect. We will find that it is not easy because we tend to fall away from God's perfection over and over again. But God always gives us the grace to repent and get back on track. God never stops trusting in us and supporting us. Even through our weaknesses, and maybe because of them, we grow in perfection of holiness by God's grace. Holiness is achieved by practicing holiness. Let us remember that we are God's servants and proclaim Him today and always! Amen!

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time (7/19/09)

Why was Jesus so popular with the ordinary people? He taught authoritatively that even our inner thoughts can be sinful, making the commandments that much harder to keep. Yet people thronged to hear him. Yes, some probably came just to see a healer or to be healed. But they sensed something much deeper about Jesus that attracted them. It was his compassion.

In the gospel the apostles are returning from their labors of preaching and healing, and they are tired. Jesus says they need to rest so they try to go off by themselves. But the people won't leave them alone. The gospel relates those wondrous lines, "...his heart was moved with pity for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things"(Mark 6:34). Jesus loves us so much that he wants to guide us to his Father. Anyone willing to listen to him energizes him to fulfill his mission. Jesus wants us to know the meaning of our lives as a part of God's plan for the redemption of the world. If we listen to Jesus as he teaches us through the Church today we will know our way. Yes, the Church teaches with the authority of Jesus. Sometimes that's all people hear and they might not see the compassionate arm of Jesus in the Church. But Jesus continues to show his compassion for us sinners today through the sacrament of Reconciliation.

Jesus loves us and wants us to be healed from our sins and the effects of sin in the world. Through sincere repentance in Reconciliation Jesus heals us of the eternal consequences of our sins, and then asks us to go and be his compassion to others by making up for the temporal consequences of our sins as well as the sins of the world. In addition he asks us to teach each other to avoid sin. That is how we show the love and compassion of Jesus to our neighbor. It is not easy but it is incredibly fulfilling, and it is only accomplished through our cooperation with the grace of Jesus. May God bless us all in his work!