

CELEBRATE SABBATH

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

The more simply you live, the more secure and free you will be!

I Kings 19:16, 19-21

This excerpt gives us an inspiring and amusing story of the call of the Prophet Elisha. Elisha was called as he was plowing the field. He slaughtered the oxen he was plowing with and used the plowing equipment for fuel to cook the flesh of the oxen and gave it his people to eat and followed Elijah through whom God had called him.

The Lord calls you to friendship, to deeper union, to be a leader, to be a minister, to serve his people.... Take time...reflect on your response.

Psalm 16

This Psalm is probably composed by a convert confessing that he has found the God of Israel his "rock" and he is taking refuge in this God. He has also found the people of God, the faithful ones, to be a delight. He muses, "how wonderful...what pleasure" to know faithful people! And he promises not to associate with the ungodly. He affirms his faith in the God of Israel as everything for him. He says, "Yahweh is all I have" and "Yahweh will lead me to life".

**Keep me, O God, for in you I take refuge;
I say to the Lord, "My Lord are you.
O Lord, my allotted portion and my cup,
You it is who hold fast my lot."**

Galatians 5:1, 13-18

Paul had taught the Galatians to trust in God's gift of Grace and live a life of Grace. His position was that the way of Grace and the way of law were mutually exclusive. The way of the law makes salvation dependant on human achievements and the way of Grace makes a person depend on the mercy of God. The essence of Christian life was seen as a personal relationship with Jesus and not obedience to any law. With the coming of the reign of Grace, the reign of law was ended.

This led to misunderstandings and misinterpretations to the point of saying that the law did not matter and that all that mattered was trust in God's Grace and do what you like. Now Paul set out to teach the Galatians that God's love frees us to love and to live in the spirit of Jesus and not follow our own desires and inclinations. Those who follow Christ are guided by the spirit and they must follow the way of the spirit and not of the flesh. "If you are guided by the spirit, you are not under the law".

You are called for freedom. Use this freedom as an opportunity to serve one another in love. Do not consume one another (biting and tearing each other as Paul says to the Galatians) but empower one another in love.

Break the yoke of hatred, oppression, discrimination, sin, violence....and accept the yoke of freedom, harmony. Communion, fellowship....

Luke 9:51-62

This excerpt gives us the response Jesus made to those who did not welcome him and to those who wished to follow him. It also tells us about how he challenged them to remain resolute and faithful to their mission and surrender themselves in service. Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem through Samaritan territory. The Samaritans did not welcome him. James and John wanted to do something about it. They asked him if they could call down fire from heaven and destroy them. It was another way of saying, "Shall we beat their brains out?" Jesus said: Let them be. Let's go on to fulfill our mission.

Jesus journeyed into hostile territory without fear and without security measurers and invited others to follow him without turning back.

Cultivate values of the Kingdom, nonviolent attitude, love of enemies, love for the "reign" of God above earthly matters, tenacity in fulfilling chosen mission.....

Someone in the crowd expressed his desire to follow Jesus and he was asked to count the cost. Jesus called others to follow him and they had various excuses and he challenged them to seize the opportunity to be involved in the kingdom.

Count the cost before you make choices and decisions. Don't get carried away with feelings and ideas of the moment..... Learn to prayerfully discern choices.

Seize the opportunity when it comes. There is tragedy in "unseized" moments. May God give us strength to make choices and decisions that will save us from the tragedy of "unseized" moments.

When you have come to know the urgency of getting out of a situation or into a new or different situation, choose to do so now. Do not wait for tomorrow. Now is the moment of Grace...Now is the kingdom.

Make a clean break from all the binding forces in your life for discipleship with Jesus.

Stay focused on the Lord and His purpose for you..... do not look back or get side-tracked..... stay focused... no turning back.

Saint of the Day, June 26 - St. Anthelm and 19 other saints are remembered this day.

Anthelm was born in 1107 in a castle near Chambery, in Savoy, France. He was ordained a priest and visited the Carthusian Charterhouse at Portes, where he entered the Order at the age of thirty. Two years later, in 1139, he was appointed abbot of Le Grande Chartreuse, which had been damaged. He was an effective administrator there. While under his direction, the community increased in numbers and fervency. He restored and improved the buildings, including constructing a defensive wall and an aqueduct. The rules of the order were standardized and changed to allow women the opportunity to enter the order in their own houses. He also brought the other houses of the order into closer alignment with the motherhouse.

Anthelm continued in his office almost constantly for twenty-four years, barring a period of a few years when he was a hermit. After a few years as a hermit, starting in 1152, Anthelm returned to Le Grande Chartreuse and defended Pope Alexander III against the antipope Victor IV. In 1163, the pope appointed him as bishop of Belley, France. Anthelm reformed the clergy and regulated affairs, going as far as to excommunicate a local noble, Count Humbert of Maurienne, who had taken one priest captive and murdered another priest trying to free him. When Humbert appealed to Rome and won a reversal, Anthelm left Belley in protest. Pope Alexander then sent Anthelm to England to mediate the dispute between Henry II and St. Thomas Becket. Anthelm was unable to undertake that journey. He returned to Belley to care for the poor and for the local lepers. Anthelm died on June 26, 1178.

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