

CELEBRATE SABBATH

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Childhood means simplicity.
Look at the world with the eyes of children.**

Isaiah 66:10-14

The sixth century prophet shares his vision of mother Jerusalem in an all-embracing love of her children, nursing her children and taking delight in their restoration. Loved, forgiven and restored by God, Jerusalem would stand as a sign of compassion and power among the peoples. The power of the Lord will be revealed in and through his servants.

Psalms 66

The Psalmist invites all people, not just the believing Israel, to shout joyfully to the Lord and sing him glorious praises. He marvels at the awesome deeds of the Lord and calls all people to be faithful to their promises and vows. God is so awesome and so powerful that his enemies have no chance, but cringe! He invites all people to come and see what God has done.

The Lord has not withheld his steadfast love from me, he says. This is a source of great joy. It is also a source of inspiration and strength. It is a challenge to reach out to others in love - "not to withhold" our love from others. We are called to give what we have received as gifts from the Lord.

**Shout joyfully to God, all the earth,
Sing praise to the glory of his name;
Proclaim his glorious praise.
Say to God, "How tremendous are your deeds!"**

Galatians 6:14-18

In this excerpt, Paul tries to convince the Galatians that it is through the cross of Jesus that salvation has come to sinful humanity. Paul's opponents insisted on the necessity of the law and circumcision for salvation. It means nothing whether one is circumcised or not. All that matters is that one is created anew. Paul was convinced that it was the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus that brought salvation. Paul wished peace and mercy on all who follow this rule of life.

Luke 10:1-12, 17-20

Jesus said to his disciples, "Look, there is a rich harvest....." Jesus looked at a crowd

and saw a rich harvest while the Pharisees looked at the same people and found only sinful, unfaithful people worthy of judgment and condemnation. Jesus found people to be gathered, to be brought in and not shut out.....

The disciples of Jesus are called to maintain a positive attitude toward the world around them and gather people in rather than alienate them.....

The disciples were given a God-directed mission and not a self-fulfilling, self-directed mission. There was an urgency about fulfilling this mission because the mission was the proclamation of the presence of the Kingdom of God – it was about the rich harvest waiting to be gathered in and not about some future reality.

So, the disciples of Jesus were called to live a simple life, travel light and not be burdened with stuff that weighs them down.....

Disciples of Jesus are called to be bearers of good news, of peace, of God’s forgiving love, of God’s healing presence....and never to become a burden to others.....

The seventy-two disciples went on their first mission and they were excited about their accomplishments.... the devils became subject to their power.... who wouldn’t be excited!!! They returned and told their master about all the wonderful things they did. The master told them to rejoice, not in their accomplishments, but in their being accepted into the kingdom.

The joy of a disciple is in being a disciple and not in doing the work of the disciple. All that is done is only an expression of discipleship. Being a disciple is reward and joy in itself.

Saint of the day, July 3 - St. Thomas, Apostle and 30 other saints are remembered this day.

We know very little about St. Thomas. He was chosen by Jesus to be one of his twelve apostles. He was an extraordinary person. He was blamed and praised and thanked for the same qualities: Impulsiveness and skepticism. He was impulsive enough to say to his friends “let us go and die with him”, he was skeptical about where his master was going and how to get there, he was doubtful about the resurrection and he was not going to believe the word of others, he would believe only when he could touch the wounds of his master and finally he was impulsive enough to say, “my Lord and my God” when he met his master again.

The seeking, questioning nature of Thomas made it possible for him to discover the truth for himself. His impulsiveness helped him to surrender to the truth when he finally found it. After all, he wasn’t skeptical, and he wasn’t impulsive.... he was just seeking the truth and he was ready to give himself to the truth he found.

The Gospel of John tells us the following about Thomas. In John 11:1-16, when Jesus told his disciples that he was going to Bethany because his friend Lazarus had died, Thomas said to the others “Let us also go, that we may die with him.” He knew that his master’s life was in danger. But he was ready to face the danger. When Jesus spoke of going to the Father, Thomas said, “Lord, we do not know where you are going, how do we know the way?” (John 14:1-5). After the resurrection of Jesus, Thomas refused to believe the testimony of others. He had to see it for himself (John 20:25-29). When Jesus appeared again, Jesus invited Thomas to probe his wounds and told him to not persist in his unbelief. Thomas worshipped Jesus and exclaimed, “My Lord and my God!” Thomas is remembered as a missionary in India.

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