



Blessed Sacrament Parish

Homily by Father Mike Kuse

October 21, 2018 Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading I Isaiah 53:10-11

Psalm 33:4-5, 18-19, 20, 22

Reading II Hebrews 4:14-16

Gospel Mark 10:42-45

Homily

More than likely, all of us gathered here or anywhere throughout the world could honestly say that at different times we are jealous, and jealous for different reasons. Somebody has a nicer house, or somebody has nicer clothes, or somebody went to this school or somebody has something I want—whatever it is and Jesus says, “You know, if you are busy being jealous about everybody, then you don’t realize how gifted you are. And there are people jealous of you.” Think about that for a minute.

How has God gifted each one of us, and how many people are jealous of us? The truth is you don’t need to be jealous. And that is the catch in the readings this weekend. Jesus says, “I want you to come to the throne of Grace, and Grace is a gift that can’t be bought. Grace is freely given and Jesus is telling his disciples, “This is what I am giving you. The only thing that is going to cost you is that you are to follow me. Open up your life and you ask for things that I know you need, not things that you want.”

If we think about this, sometimes we are afraid of that possibility. We are afraid and think, “I better be careful and watch out what I ask for because God might give me more than I want—and that is going to put me in a spot.”

There is a writer, a novelist, from Great Britain, Graham Green, who has written several books. He heard about Padre Pio. Padre Pio was a mystic who felt the wounds of Jesus in his hands and his side. So Graham Green thought, “I have just got to meet this guy.” So he arranged to fly to the monastery where Padre Pio lived. When he got there they were having Mass right before his appointment. He had a 15-minute appointment with Padre Pio and he had flown all the way over from Great Britain to see him.

He went to Mass and when Mass was over, he was so moved by Padre Pio that he was speechless—and was afraid. “What can I really ask of God? Maybe I am more blessed than I realize.” When Mass was over instead of keeping his appointment with Padre Pio, he called a taxi, went to the airport, got on the next plane and flew back to Great Britain. Somebody asked him, “Why? Why did you cancel an appointment with someone like that?” And Graham Green said, “After I witnessed him celebrate Mass, I really became very afraid of what he was going to say to me. And I was afraid of how it was going to change my life.”

You and I are like Graham Green. We’re rich. We’re rich in ways we don’t even understand. But then somebody else has something we think will help us, and we find out in the process that we need to find out for ourselves what we need. And we ask, “What’s going to make me be the best person, the happiest person that I can possibly be?”

In the Gospel Jesus continues that search and opens the eyes of the apostles to a new way of thinking. When James and John wanted that first place spot he said, “Get lost. You’re not equipped for first place. And besides, in my Kingdom there is no such thing as first place—everybody is welcome at the Throne of Grace. Everybody is blessed in ways they cannot understand. And you’re only going to find happiness when you realize that I give you my body and my blood. And when I give you my body and blood—you have everything you need to be the best person you can possibly be, at any moment in your life.”

Think about that. The body of Christ. Amen. The blood of Christ. Amen. We know it’s important but do we really understand that once we have received communion it is not multiple choice—we don’t ask, “What kind of wine would you like this morning? Would you like wheat? Would you like regular?” I’ll tell you what. It’s all the same. It’s very simple. But Jesus is getting his point across and says, “Since you are all different, when you leave church you will be filled to capacity to live your life. That will make everyone know just who I am— and others will not be jealous because they are also being fulfilled.”

So as we walk out of church and go home and to different places throughout the week, we are all going to do many wonderful things. Jesus says, “Just remember, I have given you every single thing you need. Not more, not less. And remember also, that when you receive my body and blood—you have to be open to the changes that will occur in your life.”

This morning, may you and I think about that. And Jesus says, “You know, as you leave church there probably should be a big billboard across the street saying, ‘Remember to wash feet this week.’ Be ready to wash feet and I will take you on a journey from now until next Sunday when you come back here. You have no idea what I am going to ask of you except that I promise you will have everything that you need. And when you realize that you have everything that you need—then give it away because if you give it away—you are going to be replenished a hundred times. If you hold onto it, I can’t give you any more.” And that’s where jealousy comes in.

So this morning you and I just need to say, “OK, God. I don’t know if I can handle this, but I will give it my best try. I’ll do my best to wash feet. I’ll do my best to know that you’ll never leave my life empty. I will always do my best for you.”

That’s the gift of faith. Jesus speaks to you today as he spoke to the apostles, “Don’t worry about being in first place. Just be who you are, wherever you are, and let me take care of you. And just know that when you trust in me, I will give you the Throne of Grace. I will never let you down. I will create a path for you that no one else needs to take. But when you are blessed, remember one thing: If you don’t wash feet you are holding something inside. That’s not why you come to church. You come here so that I can feed you—and I am asking you to remember to feed someone else.”

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