

HOMILY 14th SUN OT YRA 2017

How many of you are familiar with synergy? This is the interaction or cooperation between two or more individuals, companies, organizations that can produce a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate efforts. Two individuals working together with synergy can accomplish more than they can if you add up what they can accomplish individually. This is a good thing right? An example of two organizations where there is no synergy is our Democratic and Republican parties. Not much synergy there! I think they definitely need some synergy, but that is another homily. Jesus says: “Take my yoke upon you and learn from me.” This is an agricultural example of synergy. When you yoke two oxen together it forces them to cooperate so they can pull more weight together than the sum of what they could pull separately. Jesus wants us to cooperate with him with synergy. A good thing. Just imagine what we could do with Jesus with synergy!

How do we do that? I think we get some insight from the Gospel. This Gospel is a prayer. Listen to the first couple of lines and see if you can identify it. “I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned, you have revealed them to little ones. Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will.” What does that sound like? Almost sounds like the Our Father, right? It is a prayer. To understand the significance of this prayer you need to know what happened in the Gospel right before this. Jesus looks at the towns where he performed miracles and mighty deeds, and many of the people rejected his preaching. Jesus has just experienced a great big failure, and he is probably disappointed. If I were Jesus at this point my prayer may be something like this. Ok God, I am out teaching people everything you taught me, performing mighty deeds, and the wise and the learned are not accepting it. You would think the wise and the learned would get that this is the truth. I am doing my part. When are you going to do your part and make them listen?” But Jesus does not do this. He goes to his Father and prays: “Father, I give you praise. I am out here teaching all you have taught me and doing mighty deeds and it is just not working

with everyone. The wise and the learned people are not accepting our message. Only the little ones, the ones who are vulnerable and open to our message are accepting it. This is your will. I will continue what I am doing.” Notice, Jesus does not have the master plan, he is discerning as he goes along just like us. Jesus is fully human and fully divine, so in his humanness, it is all unfolding to him. Are you more like the wise and the learned or like the little ones? We need to be more open to God in our prayer to have synergy with him. We need to be vulnerable and open to him like the little ones. Frequently our intellect, our wisdom gets in the way of our synergy with God. Sometimes we think we know what we want, we think we know what is best, and we try to force our plan much longer than we should. I talk to people who are still hanging on to something years after they should have let go and changed course. I have become very aware of that in my life. If things are not working out the way I had planned I question right away if it is God’s will. Sometimes I think it is and I continue but I am open to change course.

This requires a particular type of prayer. Jesus says: “Take my yoke upon you and learn from me...and you will find rest for yourselves. The prayer I am talking about is a resting with Jesus. This rest is not just a break between two work periods. It is a time of reflection and understanding. Tell Jesus what you are struggling with. Rest with him and be vulnerable and open. Jesus message cannot be comprehended by those who are too full of their own ideas and opinions. It may take a while. We do not always get it right away. And we have to figure it out one step at a time. You notice Jesus did not get the master plan as a result of his prayer. Jesus relationship with the Father is not about an exchange of intellectual knowledge. There exchange is about an intimate relationship, it is the language of the heart. This is the relationship we are looking for with Jesus.

So, do you want to have synergy with Jesus? Pray, rest with him.