

HOMILY 5TH SUN EASTER YRA 2017

This weekend being Mother's Day, I have been thinking about my mother. She went home to the Lord 16 years ago and I still miss her on Mother's Day. I have been thinking about all of the things she taught me, and this is one of the things she taught me. I was buying my first house. I put all of the money that I had down on the house to keep the payments down. The day I moved in, I notice that the owners had taken the washer and drier that they were supposed to leave. I had no money to buy a washer and dryer. The next day I was reading the newspaper and noticed that washers and dryers were on sale at Sears. I called Mom and said: "Washers and dryers are on sale today at Sears, isn't that great. I am going to go right over there and buy a washer and dryer while they are still on sale." My Mother said: "Jim. Washers and dryers are on sale every day. That does not mean it is a good deal. You just never noticed before because you were not looking for them. I will help you figure out if it is good deal or if you should wait." I have found that is true of a lot of things. They have been there for years but I never noticed because it was not important to me at the time.

Sometimes I think this is true with God. He is with us 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, but we do not always see him if we are not looking for him. In the Gospel reading today we heard Jesus say: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Do you believe that? I have come to realize that Jesus is the way to health, wholeness, fulfillment and joy in this world and the next. He is the way. But if we believe that, why do we leave him out of so many of our decisions? But if we are going to notice him, in many cases we need to seek him out. Once in a while Jesus will do something to get our attention, but most of the time we need to make room for him in our lives. I check in with Jesus prayer every time I make a major decision. Sometimes the prayer is more like talking to myself figuring out the

right thing to do. Sometimes I sit in silence and during the prayer time or a later time; I just know what to do. I know it is particularly from God when it is a decision I never would have come up with on my own. Sometimes it is the more difficult route to go. Sometimes it is something I really do not want to do. You are not going to hear voices or see visions, but somehow Jesus can make his insights known. Jesus wants to communicate with us, but we have to listen. We have to seek him out.

Jesus also speaks to us through other people. In the first reading today, they were having a particular problem in the early Church. As the Church grew, suddenly it included Hellenists, who were Jews that spoke only Greek. The Hebrew Jews only spoke Aramaic. The 12 Apostles were unable to effectively minister to the Hellenist Jews, so they had to come up with a solution. Together they picked 7 faith filled men who spoke Greek to minister to the Hellenists. I think Jesus communicated through this whole group of people. They did not say: "Well those Hellenists will just have to learn Aramaic. They are the problem." The make-up of the Church was changing and the Church had to change to meet everyone's needs. The number of Catholics that have left the Church is increasing every year. If we continue to do what we have always done this will continue to happen. I think it is up to all of us to come together and make some changes to turn that around. Jesus will work through us. It is up to the bishops to change doctrine and dogma and major Church teaching. However we can make all kinds of changes in the Church on our own. We can figure out together how to be more welcoming, less judgmental and more relevant to people's lives in 2017. I think we can become a kinder Church where people will come to be helped, a Church that people view as helpful to their daily lives. What do you think we can do here at St. Edith to better meet the needs of our people?