

HOMILY 5TH SUN OT YRB 2018

There is a story that comes out of WW II. A platoon of American soldiers was stranded on one side of a minefield they had to cross. The commander of the platoon came up with a plan. One man would walk the mine field making footprints for others to follow. When a man hit a mine, he would be replaced by another man until they had a safe way to cross for all of the soldiers. The big question was who is going to start? The commander insisted on starting and risking his life for his men. He made it safely across the minefield and so did all of his men. Jesus has done the same thing for us. He came into the world as a helpless child and walked the minefield of life. He showed us how to live and be whole. At the end of the minefield for Jesus, was the suffering of the cross and then the new life of the Resurrection. Jesus has redeemed us.

In the Gospel reading today, people were flocking to Jesus for healing. Jesus healed them then and heals us today. He leads us today through the minefield of life, through the suffering and death to the new life of the Resurrection. We now know that we are body, mind and spirit and all three of these areas interact to affect our health and wellbeing. We frequently pray for physical healing for ourselves and for others, but today I want to talk about spiritual healing. The first step to spiritual healing is to acknowledge our hurt, our brokenness. If we do not acknowledge our brokenness, it becomes a wound and gets worse. Just like a physical wound needs to be treated, you need to look at it, clean it, maybe bandage it, maybe you need medical treatment. If you try to ignore your spiritual wounds they will likely to get worse. If we do not face our brokenness, we do things to cover it up so we can try to ignore it. We may turn to drugs or alcohol or some other unhealthy behavior to cover up the pain. If we were made to feel unworthy or inadequate, we may get into a cycle of overachieving. This may even seem ok for a while until you realize that no matter how much you accomplish, you will never worthy and

you may spend a lot of time achieving things that you do not even want. Maybe you have been rejected or abandoned, so you avoid getting too close emotionally to others.

The first step is acknowledging our brokenness and taking it to Jesus in prayer. We need to acknowledge and feel the pain and suffering. We need to join our suffering with the suffering of Jesus on the cross and he will help us. Eventually the suffering becomes redemptive. After the cross is the Resurrection, new life. The suffering becomes a place of strength, depth and compassion for others experiencing suffering. Many of us have brokenness left over from our childhood. You may have felt feel shame, that you were unworthy, unlovable, inadequate, and as children we have a hard time naming them and processing them, but that does not make them less real. Maybe you were bullied or excluded as a child. Maybe you were abused or suffered a loss. Maybe you have been hurt as an adult, and you are trying to ignore it. All these things can affect us. Spend some time praying about it and acknowledge your brokenness.

Once we acknowledge our brokenness, the next step is forgiveness. No one can change the past, but we can forgive the person that hurt us. If we do not forgive we will become angry, resentful, bitter or depressed. And maybe we have to forgive ourselves. The Sacrament of Reconciliation may help. Sometimes it is just healing to talk to a priest, another human being. Maybe if you know that God forgives you, you can forgive yourself. I have confessions every Saturday from 3:30 to 4:30, or call the office and make an appointment. There is always spiritual healing through the Sacrament. Maybe you would benefit from the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. We frequently just think about physical healing from the Sacrament but we can also receive psychological and spiritual healing. I celebrate the Sacrament of Healing the first weekend of every month after one of the Masses. If you need spiritual healing, please join us. I will not ask you why you are there, but would be happy to discuss that with you if you

would like. Maybe it would help you to see a counselor to help you to sort that all out. We have a counselor that sees people in our office space. Call the office and get her contact information.

And all of this must be done in the context of prayer. We need to discuss all of this with Jesus, and give him some quiet space and some time to respond and guide. You must be persistent in prayer. Sometimes it takes a while for spiritual healing, just like it takes time for physical healing. And maybe Jesus is not going to heal you in the way you expect to be healed. Jesus has walked the minefield, and will lead you. Jesus will never leave you. You can be healed. You can be whole.