

HOMILY 31ST SUN OT YRB 2018

I have been thinking this week about the people that have been important to me. I think that some of the teachers I have had over the years made a big difference in my life, in fact changed my life. Teaching is a very important vocation. I think there are three characteristics of a great teacher. First of all a great teacher helps you to learn something important and insightful. You are glad you were able to learn it. Second, a great teacher teaches with great passion. You can tell that they care deeply about the subject matter. Third, really great teachers brought more out of me than I knew I had. A really great teacher made me grow. Challenged me. Made me believe that just ok was not good enough.

Today in the Gospel reading the scribes called Jesus teacher and asked him which is the first of all of the commandments. Jesus did not give them one, but gave them two, and neither of them were one of the Ten Commandments. Jesus gave them the new commandment, love God and love your neighbor. This is really important. This new commandment can take the place of all of the law and all of the commandments if we follow it. And the two commandments taken separately were not new. They were already part of the Old Testament. It is combining them into one commandment that makes them particularly insightful. Jesus meets my first criteria for a great teacher. And he must have delivered this knowledge with great passion. The people that were there that day did not dare ask him any other questions. They showed him great respect. And Jesus must have taught with great passion considering that grown men and women dropped everything and followed him, even though they were not sure where they were going. Jesus meets the second criteria for a good teacher. And have you ever heard anything more challenging than the new commandment, love God and your neighbor? And the more we love,

the better our lives become and the better we are able to love. Jesus meets the third criteria for a great teacher. Jesus meets all of the criteria for a great teacher!

We have been focusing on evangelization at St. Edith for almost 8 years, and we have made great progress. Jesus calls all of us as his disciples to share our faith with one another. I think the same qualities that make a great teacher make a great evangelizer. First, we all have important and insightful knowledge to share, because Jesus taught us. Second everyone that is here is passionate about their faith. Most of the people here are at Mass every weekend. We have hundreds and hundreds of volunteers at St. Edith that come together and make all kinds of things happen. You would not do that if you were not passionate about your faith. Third, as disciples of Jesus Christ we have a challenging message, love God and love one another. Maybe we need to get a little better at number three. Maybe we need to get a little more comfortable inviting people to our church and into our ministries. Maybe we can challenge one another a bit more. Maybe we could bring things out of each other that we never knew we had.

This weekend, the Archdiocese of Detroit is launching their plan to evangelize in the Archdiocese. Their plan is called *Unleash the Gospel*. Much of what they are proposing we have already done at St. Edith, but we are hoping to get some fresh ideas. Our new Deacon Don attended training at the AOD and he is here today to tell us about what we can do to become part of this movement.