

## HOMILY 3<sup>RD</sup> SUN OT YRC 2019

I have been thinking a lot lately about the divine harmony that God has created in the world. In the second reading today St. Paul tells us “As a body is one through it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also in Christ.” The body has many different parts and when each part functions as they were meant to function, there is a divine harmony. But if we try to walk with our hands, we are going to have some difficulty. As long as eyes see and ears hear, things go well. And we can never say we do not need one of the parts of the body. We may think that the eyes or the ears are very important but we really do not need the feet. We will have problems if we try and walk. Every part of our body is needed and every part needs to be doing what it is meant to do to achieve the divine harmony that God created. We are the Body of Christ in the world and to the extent that we do what we were meant to do in the world, we add to the divine harmony. Everyone is needed. What each person does affects the whole. It is key for us to find out what we are meant to do and then and do it. This is a lifelong process.

St. Paul also tells us that we all have different gifts. We call them charisms. They are gifts from the Holy Spirit that we all have, and we are to use to help others. You need to name your charisms and then use them in different areas of your life. Charisms are something you are good at and things that you like to do. They are things that you were always good at, something that you kind of have a knack for. You may not discover them until later in your life, but you have the ability from the time you try them. Other people tend to see these qualities in you and they seek them out even if you do not recognize them yourself. You can get better at them by taking classes, practicing them or otherwise developing them, but you had the gift to start with. We tend to undervalue our charisms. I hear people say: “That is no big deal. I have just always been able to do that.” It may be no big deal to you, but it is a big deal. When you use your charisms to help others you can accomplish great things. When we think of charisms we tend to think only about how they play out in service to the Church, but they pay out in all areas of our lives.

I was talking to my friend Ryan one day. I was getting some advice from him about my ministry and at one point he said: “You are really doing God’s work and helping people through your ministry. I just sell widgets.” And I said: “Don’t undervalue what you do. You are also doing God’s work and helping people through what you do.” Now I have known him for a long time so I have a good idea what his charisms are. He has the charism of wisdom. He can take intellectual knowledge and knowledge he has gained through experience, cut through the irrelevant information and apply it in a practical way to his situation. That is what makes him a good salesman. He is always one of the top salespeople every year. Other salespeople that are struggling seek him out, and he shares his gift of wisdom with them. He will spend days making sales calls with them, giving them the commissions. This cuts into his own sales time but he is still consistently on top. Now sales are really competitive but he still shares his charism and accomplishes great things for himself and helps others. When he was a sales manager, his boss called him one time and told him that he wanted him to fire one of the salesmen that were working for him because he was not meeting his sales quotas. Ryan said: “I can see why his sales are bad. I think it would be unfair to fire him now.” His boss said: “I don’t care about that; I think you should fire him.” Ryan said: “I am not going to do that. I am going to work with him.” Now that did not score him any points with his boss, but in the end, he used his charism to help him and his performance improved and he got to keep his job. Not long after that his boss called him and told him they were reorganizing the districts and he would have to move to Texas. Ryan told him: “My kids are in college here and my wife is established in a career. We have lived here for 30 years. We do not want to move.” He used his wisdom to negotiate a deal where he took a demotion and became a salesman in the Detroit area at the same pay, decreased status but less responsibility but the same money. He said: “I think it is a win for everyone. I can continue to pay college tuition and my family is happy that we do not have to move. He used his wisdom and did the right thing for him family. What do you think? Is he just welling widgets or is he doing God’s work? Your homework, name at least two of your charisms and make a plan for how you can use them to help others.