

HOMILY 13TH SUN OT YRC 2019

What the world needs now, is love sweet love.
It's the only thing that there's just too little of.
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No not just for some, but for everyone.

That song has been rolling around in my head all week, so I had to sing it. I think that is really what the world needs today. Love could change the world. We hear about that in the second reading today: “For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement, namely, you shall love your neighbor as yourself.” And that is what being a disciple of Jesus Christ is all about, loving your neighbor as yourself. This is a huge command. We are called to love our family and friends, even when we do not like them very much. Long term relationships are hard and regardless of how close you are with someone, your relationships are going to experience some bumps and difficulties along the way. We are called to love everyone that we come into contact with. Our Parish Family here at St. Edith, the people that we work with, the people that live in our neighborhoods, the wait staff at the restaurant, the cashier at the grocery store, the people we pass by each day as though they were invisible because we have our eyes fixed on our plan for the day. We are called to love people that we disagree with, people that we do not understand, people who are annoying, and people that always seem to step on our last nerve. We are called to love people in our local community in Livonia, in Detroit, in our country and in the world. We also have to love people we will never have personal contact with. We need to love the emigrants and refugees from other countries, remembering that we were once emigrants ourselves. We are not talking about a warm fuzzy feeling here. We are talking about treating all people with dignity respect and serving them. This is a lifelong task that we will never be able to complete if we live to be 150 years old, but we are called to spend our whole lives trying,

In the Gospel reading Jesus lists three scenarios that prevent people from following. To one individual he says: “Foxes have dens and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head.” Jesus is telling this person that being his disciple is not easy. Sometimes we are so committed to our own personal comfort, happiness, safety and financial security and providing as luxurious a lifestyle as possible to our family that we have nothing left for fulfilling our responsibilities beyond our close family circle.

Sometimes we get stuck in a fantasy that more stuff and more money is what is going to make us happy. More stuff and more money may make us happy momentarily, but it will never bring you joy or fulfillment. Only being a disciple of Jesus will do that

To a second person who said: “Lord, let me go first and bury my father.” Jesus replies: “Let the dead bury the dead.” This sounds rather harsh, but what that individual was really saying is: “I will follow you after I have completed all of my family responsibilities. After I retire, after I have raised all of my children, a task will never be done, and then there are my grandchildren, practically speaking after I am dead.”

To a third person Jesus says: “No one who sets a hand to the plow and looks to what was left behind is fit for the Kingdom of God.” This is a person cannot follow Jesus because they are stuck ruminating about the past. “I had a difficult childhood; I had a dysfunctional family; a priest did something I did not like; a parishioner offended me; I am not good enough; I do not have any gifts.” Let’s face it, we have all had difficulties in the past and we cannot change that. At some point we need to let go of it and move forward.

Loving the way we are called to love as disciples of Jesus Christ is probably the most difficult thing that we will ever attempt to do. And there are things that will block us. We can get stuck in a Spiritual Fantasy Land thinking we can be fulfilled by more comforts, more money or more stuff. We can get stuck in a Spiritual Tomorrow Land and keep putting thing off until you are out of time. We can get stuck in a Spiritual Yesterday Land where we become so stuck in the past that we cannot move forward.

Your homework today. Look at you life and decide where you are called to be a better lover and then do it beginning today. If there are any blocks preventing you from doing this, let them go. And I want you to sing the song with me because I want you to get it stuck in your head to.

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