

20260628. Cycle A. 13th Sunday in Ordinary Time. A true disciple forgets himself

There is a brilliant proverb that sums up the human search for joy perfectly: "If you want happiness for an hour, take a nap. If you want happiness for a day, go fishing. If you want happiness for a year, inherit a fortune. If you want happiness for a lifetime, help someone else."

Today, the 13th Sunday in OT, Jesus instructs us on what it means to be a true disciple; he wants us to struggle against our own passions and against sin and its effects. He tells what it takes to find joy for a lifetime and to enjoy eternal peace.

Finding true peace requires a discerning thought between desires and the intentions of the heart. Being a true disciple requires a clear understanding of the difference between flesh desires and the desires of the spirit. This is where we can say that the Word of God, in fact, leads to divisions. In the first part of today's Gospel, our Lord goes on to say that nothing should come between him and his disciples, not even father or mother, son or daughter: any and every obstacle must be avoided.

To be clear, these words do not set opposition between the first and fourth commandments (Love for God above all things, and love for the parents): he is simply indicating the order of priorities. We should love God with all our strength (Mt 22:37) and make a serious effort to become saints. And we should also love and respect -in theory and in practice- the parents God has given us; they have generously cooperated with the creative power of God, and there is so much that we owe them. But love for parents should not come before love for God; usually, there is no reason why these two loves should clash, but if that were ever to happen, we should be clear in mind and heart about what Jesus says here.

Loving God before all things and persons sounds like a hard thing to do, and in fact, it is. This teaching of our Lord asks us to be generous and to trust God to let him have his way. The key here, however, is that God never lets himself be outdone in generosity. For every act of kindness and generosity, Jesus has promised a hundredfold gain, even in this life, and later, on eternal life (Mt 19:29), to those who readily respond to his holy will.

The second part of today's Gospel continues to explain what it means to become a true disciple, a true follower of Jesus. Following Christ means doing what he asks, which means risking this present life to gain eternal life.

Being a disciple of Jesus means that we take what he has given us, allow it to mature, and to make certain we are strong in our faith, and understand that God's Word is used to heal and not to hurt, to convert, not to confront. Jesus reminds us to love; to live and love, to do to others whatever you would have them do to you.

We are called to deepen our hearts, to love wisely, to extend his kindness.

It takes maturity in Christ; when we are equipped with maturity and faith, we are ready to walk through the narrow gate. Not a harsh road, but a faithful one. A path where love and truth walk together. A way of living that is intentional, prayerful, and grounded in God. It is the road where we trust God enough that we lay things down. A way of living that is wise enough to understand, identify, and guard what truly matters. Wise enough to hold our hands to treat others with love, kindness, and dignity. Wise enough to love enough so we heal others.

Christian life is a life based on self-denial. There is no Christianity without the cross; there is no Christianity in selfish actions.

St Josemaría Escrivá says that “People who are constantly concerned with themselves, who act above all for their own satisfaction, endanger their eternal salvation and cannot avoid being unhappy even in this life. Only if a person forgets himself and gives himself to God and others, in marriage and in other aspects of life, can be happy on this earth, with a happiness that is a preparation for, and a foretaste of, the joy of heaven”

So, "If you want happiness for an hour, take a nap. If you want happiness for a day, go fishing. If you want happiness for a year, inherit a fortune. If you want happiness for a lifetime and for eternal life, forget yourself, give yourself completely to God and to others.

2 Kings 4:8-11, 14-16a

Psalms 89:2-3, 16-17, 18-19

Romans 6:3-4, 8-11

Matthew 10:37-42