

15th Sunday B. 2018

As missionary disciples we are sent to each other and we receive each other in a new evangelization that is prophetic.

In the Lector Workbook for the 15th Sunday B it reads: “Alone, one does not have to exert oneself to live the Gospel”

Addressing the question of why the disciples were sent on mission in pairs the workbook continues, “Why in pairs? With less than two the virtue of charity would not be needed. If two persons respect each other and tolerate one another’s weaknesses of body and spirit; if they are faithful to their promises and collaborate; if they make the effort to understand and listen to each other; if they pardon each other when it is necessary then they are practicing what they preach, which is a formidable witness to the Gospel.”

So we are sent to each other, and we receive each other in a new evangelization that is prophetic.

This is why Christian marriage is missionary discipleship. Married couples are missionaries of the Gospel to each other working out their salvation as husband and wife, father and mother. Your marriage is a missionary witness to the community which says, “See how these Christians love one another.”

In this time of our present national darkness any testimony for the Kingdom of Heaven is prophetic - it is light in the darkness- and so even Christian marriage is prophetic.

We who are baptized are missionary disciples. We are students of Jesus sent on mission to proclaim the Kingdom of Heaven. (Mission of Jesus, MK. 1:14- 15; mission of the disciples 16:15-18).

Marriage and family life are formation for individuals. We learn to love. Parish life is formation for Christians. We learn to love beyond our borders, gated communities and identities.

“Alone, one does not have to exert oneself to live the Gospel.”

Bishop Sullivan anointed with the Holy Spirit, sent me here to co-pastor with Fr. Michael Doyle. Where I once was alone - for ten years- now I am part of a pair. Now I must exert myself in new and different ways to live the Gospel and practice what I preach. I have been sent to you as a missionary disciple but I also am challenged to receive you as disciples on mission. And I have on my sandals!

Being a part of a pair -co-pastors- the words from the lector workbook are real, immediate, and challenging: be

faithful to promises, collaborate, make the effort to listen and understand, pardon and forgive. The effort to do this is a formation in sacrificial love and is prophetic in this time of evil spirits, and makes present the Kingdom of God.

When I was sent as the pastor for the Hispanic Community at St. Joan of Arc, it was optional for me to expand my field of love, to move out of my little piece of paradise, and step into the unknown. To do this I needed a new attitude, skills, self-knowledge and the will to love. I had to suffer the humiliation of speaking badly another language and were I had been confident, I had to learn to live in uncertainty.

The uncertainty is that while I was sent, I was also the one who receives. I received the Hispanic community to which I was sent. Will I welcome them into my life or will they have to shake the dust from their sandals?

It is in this crucible of uncertainty that authority over unclean spirits is given and a prophetic vision is seen.

I am not alone in this missionary discipleship. To each of us in this new parish of the Sacred Heart, will come a missionary. There will be a person in our pew. There will be a change in the language or music. There will be a cost in money, time, talent, comfort and identity. Unclean spirits will make their appearance and whisper their lies. There will be blood!
It will be glorious!

We have been summoned together black and white,
Hispanic and Vietnamese, gay and straight, conservative
and liberal, those sent and those receiving,
undocumented and citizens to make the effort to leave
gated communities, becoming a prophetic vision,
resisting the world rulers of this present darkness,
praising, playing and proclaiming the Good News of
Jesus Christ in the City of Camden New Jersey in the U.
S. A. In the year of our Lord 2018!