

Homily "For God so loved the world" March 15 2015

"FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD HE GAVE HIS ONLY SON, SO THAT EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM MIGHT NOT PERISH BUT MIGHT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE." JOHN 3:16

FROM TODAY'S GOSPEL OF JOHN....THE MOST POPULAR BIBLE PASSAGE OF OUR DAY.....LIKELY THE MOST PREACHED BIBLE PASSAGE OF ALL TIME. NO PRESSURE, RIGHT?

SO, AS I AM THINKING ABOUT ALL OF THIS, ABOUT HOW I'M GOING TO TAKE THE MOST FAMILIAR PASSAGE IN THE BIBLE AND BRING NEW MEANING TO IT....MAKE IT COME ALIVE FOR YOU....RELATE TO OUR LIVES AS CHRISTIANS.....

I'VE GOT NOTHING!!!!!! ABSOLUTELY NOTHING.

SO I GO TO THE SOURCE.....I GO TO ADORATIONAND SITTING RIGHT THERE IN THIS PEW, I ASK GOD FOR HELP.

GOD, I PRAYED, "WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE ME SAY TO THE PEOPLE?"

NOW, WHEN I GO TO ADORATION, YOU SHOULD KNOW, I HAVE A CONVERSATION WITH GOD. I SPEAK IN MY MIND....ASK QUESTIONS JUST LIKE THIS ONE.....AND THEN I GET WHAT I CALL DIVNINELY INSPIRED THOUGHTS, MEANING, THOUGHTS INSPIRED BY GOD, HIS WAY OF SPEAKING BACK TO ME.

(2)

IN THIS CASE WHEN I ASKED, "WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE ME SAY TO THE PEOPLE?" I GOT A QUESTION;

"WHAT DO YOU WANT TO TELL THE PEOPLE?"

AND I'M THINKING TO MYSELF, "IT'S NOT ABOUT WHAT I WANT TO TELL THEM.....

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO TELL THEM?" I NEED HELP HERE"!

SILENCE.....A REALLY LONG SILENCE

NOW I'M THINKING I MADE GOD MAD.....

YOU KNOW IT'S LIKE IT USED TO BE WITH MY DAD.....IF HE WAS YELLING AT ME,I WASN'T USUALLY HAPPY ABOUT IT, BUT I KNEW WHERE I STOOD.....IF HE GOT QUIET.....THEN I GOT WORRIED!

BUT SILENCE DIDN'T LAST FOR EVER.....AND GOD'S RESPONSE CAME..... IN A WHISPER.....

"WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR THE PEOPLE"

NOW THAT'S DIFFERENT.....NOT.... WHAT DO YOU WANT TO TELL THE PEOPLE....BUT...WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR THE PEOPLE?

AND THAT BRINGS ME TO WHERE WE ARE NOW.

(3)

WELL, NOT EXACTLY.....IT ACTUALLY TOOK ABOUT 10 DAYS OF PRAYER AND A LITTLE MORE RESEARCH...BUT ONCE I BEGAN TO THINK ABOUT WHAT I WOULD WANT FOR US ALL.....MY RESEARCH CALLED ME TO LISTEN TO THOSE AROUND ME.....

...AT THE PARISH MISSION....AT THE BAPTISM I PERFORMED FOR TWO PRECIOUS CHILDREN I DID LAST WEEK....

TALKING WITH THE KIDS FROM JGS WHEN I DID STATIONS OF THE CROSS FOR THEM LAST WEEK.....LISTENING OVER GRILLED CHEESE AND SOUP AFTER OUR FRIDAY STATIONS EVEN LISTENING TO BOTH THE MUSIC AND THE PEOPLE AT THE PRAISE AND WORSHIP SERVICE THIS PAST FRIDAY AT CHRIST THE KING.

IN EVERYTHING I DID OVER A WEEK, I LISTENEDI LISTENED FOR INSPIRATION...AND TO DISCERN...WHAT WOULD I WANT "FOR" US ALL.

"WHAT DO PEOPLE REALLY WANT....."

WHAT DO THEY DESIRE MOST.....

BUT ALSO.....

WHAT DO THEY NEED MOST.....

(4)

SO, HERE IS WHAT I WANT FOR YOU, FOR ALL OF US.....LOVE

I WANT US TO KNOW LOVE.....GOD'S GREATEST HUMAN EMOTION.....I WANT US TO LOVE..... TO BE LOVED.....I WANT US TO KNOW THAT WE ARE LOVED

I WANT US TO KNOW THE LOVE WITH WHICH GOD CREATED US....ALL OF US..... TO RECOGNIZE AND EXPERIENCE THE LOVE GOD HAS FOR US EVERY DAY AND IN EVERY WAY!

THE LOVE SAINT JOHN WROTE ABOUT IN TODAY'S GOSPEL....."FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, HE GAVE HIS ONLY SON"

TO KNOW THE LOVE OF CHRIST.....WHO DIED ON THE CROSS WITH OUR SINS.....OUT OF LOVE FOR US.....IN SCRIPTURES IT SAYS "THERE IS NO GREATER LOVE THAN TO LAY DOWN ONE'S LIFE FOR A FRIEND"!

AND OF COURSE, NOW THAT I'M HERE....AT THIS POINT

I REALIZE THAT SCRIPTURES ALSO TELL US THAT

"GOD IS LOVE"SO NOW WE BOTH KNOW THE POINT OF THE EXERCISE.

GOD WANTS US TO KNOW HIM...TO KNOW HIS LOVE....

TO RETURN THAT LOVE BY SHARING IT WITH OTHERS.....JUST

AS HIS SON JESUS TAUGHT US.... IN HIS LIFE AND IN HIS

PASSION AND DEATH.

(5)

SO HOW DO WE KNOW GOD....HOW DO WE EXPERIENCE HIS LOVE FOR US...AND SHARE IT WITH OTHERS.

I BELIEVE GOD GAVE ME THESE INSPIRATIONS TO TEACH US TWO IMPORTANT LESSONS....

FIRST.....TALK TO GOD ABOUT WHAT YOU NEED...PRAY.....SEEK HELP FROM THE ONE WITH ALL THE ANSWERS.....

THE ONE THAT LOVES YOU MOST.....

THE ONE THAT LOVES YOU UNCONDITIONALLY.....

COME TO ADORATION ...OR PRAY TO HIM AT HOME, IN THE CAR...AT WORK.....HE IS ALWAYS LISTENING.

BE SURE TO LISTEN ...FOR ...OFTEN YOUR ANSWER COMES IN A WHISPER OR FROM SOMEONE ELSE....

A CO-WORKER..... A FRIEND..... A SPOUSE... EVEN A CHILD.

HEY, MAYBE EVEN FROM SOMEONE ON THE ALTAR AT MASS!

.....YOU NEVER KNOW.

SECOND.....SHARE GOD'S LOVE WITH OTHERS. THROUGH ACTIONS & WORDS.

I SOLVED MY PROBLEM BY FOCUSING ON THE NEEDS OF OTHERS....

AND ISN'T THAT WHAT JESUS TAUGHT US.....

SO NEXT TIME YOU HAVE A PROBLEM....TRY LEAVING IT ...EVEN IF FOR JUST A FEW MINUTES.....FOCUS ON THE NEEDS OF

SOMEONE ELSE....A PHONE CALL TO A SICK

FRIEND....ENCOURAGEMENT TO SOMEONE AT WORK.

(6)

THE POINT IS.....TO LISTEN TO OTHERS....BE AWARE OF THE NEEDS..... OF YOUR SPOUSE.....YOUR KIDS....YOUR FAMILY....YOUR COMMUNITY OR YOUR CHURCH.

AS PARENTS, OUR GREATEST OPPORTUNITY IS SHARING THE LOVE OF GOD WITH OUR KIDS.

DURING LENT, BRING THEM TO DAILY MASS....TO STATIONS.

LET THEM RIDE WITH YOU AS YOU DELIVER MEALS ON WHEELS OR WORK AT THE SOUP KITCHEN....

ON VISITS TO A SICK FRIEND.... OR SOMEONE IN A NURSING HOME.

LET THEM SEE YOU SHARING THE LOVE OF GOD.

IT'S A LESSON THAT WILL LAST THEM A LIFETIME.

IN CLOSING, I'D LIKE TO THANK GOD FOR HIS LOVE AND THE INSPIRATION HE GAVE ME FOR TODAY.....I THANK GOD FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMLIIY AS WELL....WHETHER YOU ARE PARISHIONERS OF GOOD SHEPHERD OR VISITING OUR CHURCH.....GOD BLESS YOU FOR BEING HERE. MY PRAYER FOR ALL OF US....ALL CHRISTIANS... AS WE APPROACH THE MOST HOLY CELEBRATION OF EASTER.... LORD WE ASK YOU TO INSPIRE US TO COME TO YOU WITH ALL OF OUR NEEDS....HOPES...AND DESIRES.....

WE ASK YOU LORD TO HELP US EXPERIENCE YOUR LOVE IN A NEW AND TANGIBLE WAY.....BY SHARING IT WITH OUR FAMLIES AND WITH OTHERS WE MEET WHO ARE IN NEED OF KINDNESS, COMPASSION AND LOVE.

WE ASK THIS THROUGH CHRIST OUR LORD.....AMEN