

Tenth Sunday in Ordinary Time – June 10, 2018 – Good Shepherd Parish

Scripture Reading Genesis 3:9-15

After the man, Adam, had eaten of the tree, the LORD God called to the man and asked him, "Where are you?" He answered, "I heard you in the garden; but I was afraid, because I was naked, so I hid myself." Then he asked, "Who told you that you were naked? You have eaten, then, from the tree of which I had forbidden you to eat!" The man replied, "The woman whom you put here with me—she gave me fruit from the tree, and so I ate it." The LORD God then asked the woman, "Why did you do such a thing?" The woman answered, "The serpent tricked me into it, so I ate it."

Then the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, you shall be banned from all the animals and from all the wild creatures; on your belly shall you crawl, and dirt shall you eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike at your head, while you strike at his heel."

Responsorial Psalm Ps 130:1-2,3-4,5-6,7-8

R. (7bc) **With the Lord there is mercy, and fullness of redemption**

Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD;
LORD, hear my voice!
Let your ears be attentive
to my voice in supplication.

If you, O LORD, mark iniquities,
LORD, who can stand?
But with you is forgiveness,
that you may be revered.

I trust in the LORD;
my soul trusts in his word.
More than sentinels wait for the dawn,
let Israel wait for the LORD.

For with the LORD is kindness
and with him is plenteous redemption
and he will redeem Israel
from all their iniquities.

Scripture Reading 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1

Brothers and sisters: Since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, *I believed, therefore I spoke*, we too believe and therefore we speak, knowing that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and place us with you in his presence. Everything indeed is for you, so that the grace bestowed in abundance on more and more people may cause the thanksgiving to overflow for the glory of God. Therefore, we are not discouraged; rather, although our outer self is wasting away, our inner self

is being renewed day by day. For this momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to what is seen but to what is unseen; for what is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is eternal. For we know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven.

Gospel Mark 3:20-35

Jesus came home with his disciples. Again the crowd gathered, making it impossible for them even to eat. When his relatives heard of this they set out to seize him, for they said, "He is out of his mind." The scribes who had come from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "By the prince of demons he drives out demons." Summoning them, he began to speak to them in parables, "How can Satan drive out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand; that is the end of him. But no one can enter a strong man's house to plunder his property unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can plunder the house. Amen, I say to you, all sins and all blasphemies that people utter will be forgiven them. But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an everlasting sin." For they had said, "He has an unclean spirit." His mother and his brothers arrived. Standing outside they sent word to him and called him. A crowd seated around him told him, "Your mother and your brothers and your sisters are outside asking for you." But he said to them in reply, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking around at those seated in the circle he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."

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INVITATION TO PRAY

Pause for a few moments of silence and enter more deeply into the presence of God.

Proclaim the Scriptures out loud.

As you listen to the scriptures be attentive to a word, a phrase, a question, an image, or a feeling that emerges. Reflect on this quietly or share it aloud.

INVITATION TO REFLECT

The Gospel for this 10th Sunday of Ordinary Time can be puzzling. For instance: it raises the question whether Jesus actually had brothers and sisters, and whether they and Mary, the Blessed Mother, think that he is crazy? First, did Jesus actually have brothers and sisters in our present-day sense? There are many theories, and this is one: In Semitic usage, the terms “brother” and “sister” are applied not only to children of the same parents, but to nephews, nieces, cousins, half-brothers, and half-sisters.* So, Jesus had cousins and other kin, in this alternative. Do you remember his pregnant mother’s trip to see her cousin, Elizabeth? Today children of “first cousins” are called “second cousins,” and would qualify as brothers and sisters in ancient Semitic usage. Jesus would not be different from other Nazarenes in this regard. Nor would there be a contradiction to anything central to the faith. Second, could it be that his “mother and his brothers” were among those who thought of him as “out of his mind”? The Gospel of Mark asserts only the following: “His mother and his brothers arrived. Standing outside they sent word to him and called [for] him” (Gospel). Perhaps this was just familial interest on their part instead of a desire to “seize him” and carry him away. Conclusion: we do not have to think that his mother was being critical of Jesus when she arrived with other relatives. Third: but now, Jesus seems to totally ignore his family. Hearing that they are calling out to him, Jesus says, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” And looking around at those seated in the circle he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers.”

Some have taken this speech as Jesus rejecting Mary and his other relatives. Actually it is a statement of Jesus’ mission. He is showing that the most important reason for life is the love of God and one’s neighbors, as opposed to the easy and presumably self-enclosed way of staying home where relatives will take care of you. Growth in this kind of love must come from God. As Jesus says: “whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.” He is widening our life-search to include others, not instead of the family but including them in the overall purpose of life itself: letting in the love of God and passing it along to everyone we know. Fourth, we have now discovered the meaning of Jesus’ words, “whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an everlasting sin.” Sounds severe, but it is just repeating the message of love. If a person or a society turns against (blasphemes against) the Holy Spirit of God, they will have shut off the very source of love. As we have seen repeatedly, Christians discovered the Trinity of God by seeing it played out in this world: the love of the Father for the Son, together with the loving inclusion of everything in existence, which is the work of the Holy Spirit.

*This is part of a scholars’ note in the translation called the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD), here. An additional sentence is: “The question of meaning here would not have arisen but for the faith of the church in Mary’s perpetual virginity.”

INVITATION TO GROUP SHARING

1. Adam and Eve sinned because they had free will. We still sin. There is no garden of Eden anymore but did God the Father give us anything that makes our home on earth a holy place?
2. If Adam is responsible for the “seen” and Christ is responsible for the “unseen,” could Adam’s sin be a “happy fault”? It brought Christ into our world to bring us more of an abundance of grace than we would have had in the garden of Eden.
3. Is the doing the will of God always easy? Do you think it was easy for Jesus when he figured out what God was asking him to do? Do you always know what the will of God is in a situation? What helps?

INVITATION TO ACT

Determine a specific action (individual or group) that flows from your sharing. When choosing an individual action, determine what you will do and share it with the group. When choosing a group action, determine who will take responsibility for different aspects of the action. These should be your primary considerations.

CLOSING INVITATION TO PRAY

Give thanks to God (aloud or silently) for new insights, for desires awakened, for directions clarified, for the gift of one another’s openness and sensitivity. Conclude with the following:

O God, from whom all good things come, grant that we, who call on you in our need, may at your prompting discern what is right, and by your guidance do it. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.