

7TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1 Sam 26:2. 7-9. 12-13. 22-23 1 Cor 15:45-49

Luke 6:27-38

INTENTION: PEOPLE OF THE PARISH.

INTRODUCTION

In the world we fear and hate our enemies.

In the kingdom of Heaven we are taught to

- a) love enemies and
- b) to learn the meaning of mercy.

PENITENTIAL ACT

The Lord calls us to become compassionate people.

Let us ask for his mercy.

Lord, you are kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, you forgave those who nailed you to a cross.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, you came to save the world, not to condemn it.

Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Opening

Let us pray to the Father of mercies that the grace of compassion may grow among us.

Closing

Heavenly Father, hear our prayers and bless us each day to become compassionate people, through Christ our Lord.

PRAYER OF COMMISSIONING

May the Lord of all mercies bring healing grace, through this holy sacrament, to all those whom you visit today.

May the Lord strengthen them in the grace of compassion; and may almighty God bless them, now and for ever. ***Amen.***

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Loving Those You'd Rather Hate

A man who had reached a hundred years was being interviewed by a reporter. ***"What are you most proud of?"*** the reporter asked.

"Well," said the man, ***"I don't have an enemy in the world."***

NB: Isn't that beautiful and inspirational?

"But," added the man, "I outlived every last one of them."

Jesus is saying today: ***"I say this to you who are listening: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you"***

NB : Jesus assumes that those listening to him had enemies.
: For sure having enemies transcends culture and time.
: Enemies are not limited to the ancient world for sure
❖ He, therefore, equally assumes that you and me have enemies or at least those who hate us OR those we don't want to see around.

Q: Is outliving ***"every last one of them,"*** going to become our way of handling our enemies?

Q: Is our approach just to **avoid** and **ignore** them, hoping that hoping that things will sort themselves out?

Q: or do we, secretly **hope** and **plan** and, even pray for bad things to happen to them?

Q: Or do we take a more active negative stance toward our enemies wasting time

- a) gossiping about them,
- b) spreading lies about them,

- c) turning them into the police station when they do something wrong, and
- d) even praying that God will punish them for their wicked ways.

This is how most of the world operates toward enemies:

- going to war with them.
- planning and plotting their demise.
- rejoicing in their failures and mourning at their successes.
- Writing letters, making phone calls, sending e-mails and mustering up support among friends.

That's the way the world often behaves towards its enemies, but at times I feel like the church often acts in similar fashion.

Although we sing the song ***"They will know we are Christians by our love"*** most often, people know we are Christians by ***"our hate."***

You know, Christians today can be ***"mad at the world."*** We can be mad

- about movies, the media, the militant movements...of...gays and lesbians.
- crime on the streets, and drugs in our neighbourhood.
- mad about education, the impact of society upon our children, and abortion activists.

NB: The world, at times views Christianity as more of ***an angry political activist movement*** than a spiritual organization devoted to handing out hope and healing to a hurting world.

And too often, when the world is hurting, our response is to say, ***"Well, it serves them right. We warned them this would happen."***

The Gospel today, rather than passively waiting to outlive each and every one of our enemies and rather than being reactive promotes three ways to love our enemies.

1. Do Good (Luke 6:27) 2. Bless (Luke 6:28) and 3. Pray (Luke 6:28).

1. To Do Good means that we have to make an effort and reach out to them.

It means rising above being reactive, and becoming more transformational

2. What comes to mind about Blessing our enemies is *when St John Paul visited Northern Ireland: Passing through the streets: Ian Paisley* the loyalist politician was yelling out to the pope, but St John Paul responded with a blessing.

3. The best example about Praying for our enemies is from Jesus himself. Right from the cross he prayed for his enemies: "Forgive them, for they know not what they are doing."

On a final note, recalling the dramatic story of Saul, the number one enemy of David being put in the hands of David in the first reading,
Q: Is there a contentious relationship in your life where you can follow David's example and refuse

- to harm your enemy?
- to defame
- to spread rumours about your enemy

We need God's grace for this

In professing our faith let us pray for such grace