

14TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Zechariah 9:9-10 Romans 8:9, 11-13 Matthew 11:25-30

HOMILY

‘Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest.’

This word “Come” is used almost 3000 times in the Bible and it nearly always refers to an invitation.

“Come” also indicates a move toward the Lord which means you are coming to where He is – or where He wants you to be.

In this invitation ***“Come to me”***, there is no stipulation as to who can come.

- Anyone can come:
- the wealthy, the poor, the famous, the peasant are all invited.

“Me” is a reference to Christ Jesus – the Son of God.

This is the same person that said, ***“I am the way, the truth, and the life....”***

RELIGION AS HEAVEY BURDEN

In this particular context Jesus directed his invitation towards all those who had lived their religion as a heavy burden.

Jesus was very much opposed to a religion that imposed burdens on the people.

- ❖ Religion is not about burdens, it is about relationship with God

Q: Isn’t it true that even today many Christians live **‘beaten down’** by their conscience:

- They aren’t great sinners.
- They simply have been taught to have their sin always before them and they don’t at all know the joy of God’s continuous forgiveness.

If they meet Jesus, they will find themselves much relieved.

Q: What do we do about people in this category?

WHO ARE THE BURDENED OF TODAY?

So many people still fit that burdened category today, in various other ways:

- a) Think of so many who are subjected to long hours of demanding work just to provide the basics of food and shelter for themselves and their families.
- b) Think of people who have been impacted of the COVID 19 in various ways:

The invitation to come is a call specific to the pandemic times.

Jesus wants to reach out to those burdened by all this:

- Those who have lost loved ones in the process
- Those in the NHS and care homes who are so tired from taking care of COVID patients
- Those who have lost their jobs or businesses
- But also the young recently graduated from Uni who were eager on securing jobs for themselves.

Struggle is very much a major characteristic of our life at this time of the pandemic.

Those who labour and are heavily-burdened are many and most of them are unlikely to tell you they are exhausted and stressed: you can read this from their faces.

‘Come to meand I will give you rest’ is a call to plant faith in the midst of our burdens.

- Having something to believe in is essential and finding comfort in faith can be a good start to move on.
- Faith tells us that we should see ourselves as more than our troubles.
- It allows us to re-humanise ourselves and remember that we are more than the things that make us feel helpless, isolated and unappreciated.

What does this invitation mean to us?

It means that we need to give Jesus our burdens.

He wants us to give Him all that is keeping us from Him.

Jesus is saying: ***“I am concerned about you.***

I suffered on the cross for you. Give me your burdens.

I want them, no matter how ugly, how messy they may be.”