

Thursday, Twenty Eighth Week in Ordinary Time

Luke 11:47-54

REFLECTION

Each home has a set of keys and each time we go out we make sure we have the appropriate keys on us to get back. Keys open various doors and rooms. Keys both open and close, giving access and locking away. Thus, they have a positive and a negative function, opening and closing. In the gospel reading Jesus chastises the pharisees and lawyers for not handling the key to knowledge positively. He courageously confronted them, and he was robust and stinging in his attack on them. He clearly perceives the key metaphor as having a positive role of serving to open knowledge to others and giving access to knowledge. He accuses the lawyers, the experts in the Jewish Law, of taking away this key of knowledge and burying it somewhere. They neither use it themselves nor allow others to use it. No one else would have challenged the pharisees in the way that Jesus did: *'You have not gone in yourselves and have prevented others from going in who wanted to'*. Jesus was resolute in driving his point home. They were incapable of teaching the people the treasure of the law which was in fact the Wisdom of God. From their study of the Scriptures the pharisees and the lawyers had a key which should have given them access to the Wisdom of God, incarnate in Jesus. However, not only did they not open themselves up to this Wisdom, but they had also worked to ensure others didn't gain access to this Wisdom either. We are all called to open ourselves to God's Wisdom present in Jesus and to play a role in opening that Wisdom to others. In the language of the gospel reading, we must go in ourselves, and encourage others to come in with us. We can only bring others to the Lord, if we have first found him for ourselves, or more fundamentally, allowed him to find us.