

The homily of Fifteenth Sunday in The Ordinary Time

There is a story about contribution or collaboration. A Mayor opened a big festival and invited everyone in the town. For food, he promised providing for everyone. The drink, he asked each person to bring a bottle of wine and pour into a very large barrel and everyone will drink together.

On the day of the festival, everyone brought their own wine bottle to pour into the barrel. When they finished, the Mayor held the glass to draw wine from the barrel, then he lifted the glass proclaiming: "The Festival starts". However, when the Mayor drank, he realized it was not wine but water! Because the people thought that others were going to bring wine, if I brought only a water bottle, it did not affect to the big barrel of wine. So, the festival failed, it is just by the negative and selfish thought of the townspeople.

Dear brothers and sisters! We usually think that the responsibility of proclamation of the Gospel is the duty of priests and religious who God calls and chooses in a specific way. However, we forget that since we received the Baptism, we are called to holiness and shine the light of Christ to the world. Not all of us are called to become priests or religious, but most of us are called to enter family life to make our children and families to be holy. We also called to be a good example for others who live around us in the city.

God invites us to collaborate in His work. Let us be positive, not negative, like the townspeople in the story. Let's not just know how to receive but know how to give. As Jesus teaches his disciples: "Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give". Go and glorify the Lord by your life. St. Paul said: "Woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!" and "If I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me." (1 Cor 9:16)

In today's Gospel, Jesus instructs his disciples to travel lightly. They are not to take any money, extra clothing or sandals with them. Jesus calls them to trust in the generosity of the people they will be serving. They are to trust and believe that what they need will be provided for them. We have to treat gently those who hear the word or those who reject it. Let God judge them by their deeds.

Jesus not only commissioned the proclamation of the Gospel to his disciples, but also wanted their lives to conform to their teachings. He invites them to commit themselves to be fully missionary. It is important to remember that the disciple have

to follow Jesus, live out his words and live a life of poverty. St. Paul reminds us that “the Lord ordained that those preach the gospel should live of the gospel”. (1 Cor 9:14) And the Lord promised that who commit themselves to poverty and sacrifice to others will be given a hundredfold by God.

Many of us are afraid to be a witness for the Gospel. We fear that we don't have the ability. Don't think that way. Look at prophet Amos in the first reading. Amos said: “I was no prophet, nor have I belonged to a company of prophets; I was a shepherd and a dresser of sycamores.” (Amos 7:14). Although he was a shepherd, God seized him, God sent him away and made him a prophet. Amos did not want to be a prophet because he resigned as a shepherd. God chose him as a prophet: “Go, prophesy to my people Israel.” (Amos 7:15). Therefore, God need us to courage going; then, God's graces sufficient for us.

If we are disciples of Jesus, today He also empowers us with the ability to cure the sick and drive out demons. Now, take a moment and ask yourself: “How can I help someone who is struggling? What can I do to share joy, hope and comfort with the other I encounter today?”

Dear brothers and sisters! God gifts us abundantly each day and He calls us to share the gifts and graces we receive with the people in our lives and in our world. Typically, the gifts and graces we have to share often seem insignificant to us: lending a helping hand, visiting with someone who is lonely or simply smiling at a person you pass in the grocery store. Be alert: today you may be presented with the perfect opportunity to share your abundance. Be generous with your smile, love, and attention! Truly, there are “no greater gifts”!

May we always be aware of the mission that God has given us to proclaim His Word in the world; free us from unnecessary and excesses that prevent the proclamation of the Gospel, so that we do not lose our way while carrying out the responsibility that we received from our Lord.