

Homily Resources for the 6th Sunday of Ordinary Time B, Feb 11, 2018
Readings 1st Lev 13:1-2, 45-46, Psalm 32, 2nd 1 Cor 10:31 B 11:1, Gospel Mk 1:40-45.

1. Central Thought: Jesus has the power to heal and to save everyone. How can we participate in and share in this ministry as well as trust in Jesus's power and love to heal us.

2. Scripture commentary: All three readings today illustrate the power of Jesus to heal any disease. He can reach them and heal anyone. This may be by immediate miracles or more ordinarily through the hands of doctors. On another level, Jesus also has the power to heal us spiritually, overcoming the seriousness of sin and its consequences. Our Parish needs to be a place through which people can encounter Jesus and his healing power. Additionally, we need to be mindful of our own weakness while carrying out this ministry. A humble approach is more helpful for healing.

3. That is why the first reading teaches that there are illnesses which merit protection and sins which require separation. The first reading shows the ancient Jewish attitude toward leprosy and the rules for quarantining lepers. This is why in the Sacrament of Reconciliation we promise, among other things, "to avoid the near occasions of sin". Concerning separation from unrepentant sinners see Matt 18:15-20.

4. In today's responsorial psalm, the psalmist exhorts us to rejoice in the Lord because He purifies us from our sins: "*I confessed my faults to the LORD, and you took away my guilt.*" This psalm is one of the traditional seven penitential psalms. It serves as a mini-treatise on reconciliation, covering the meaning of the spiritual leprosy of sin and showing how we can be forgiven by a sacramental encounter with God. **Confession often precedes healing.**

5. In today's epistle, St. Paul illustrates the danger of putting others at risk. Situation of eating meat offered to idols. Was it permissible to eat it? As instructed Christians, the Corinthians knew that the idols to which the meat had been sacrificed were non-existent. Paul insists, however, that the Christians should not flaunt their knowledge over against their weaker Christian brothers and sisters who had scruples. Do everything to the glory of God and try to protect all people (in the sense of not giving them offense).

How might this apply today? Alcohol, modesty, conspicuous consumption, others?

6. Today's Gospel: The power of Jesus to cure even leprosy. This event shows the power of Jesus to cure one of the most difficult of diseases to cure. Leprosy was one of the most terrifying diseases of the ancient world. No one knew where it came from or how it was propagated. At another level, this illustrates how Jesus can deliver us from all sin, spiritual leprosy.

7. A timely application to us today. We are called to be a beacon of healing in a confused and often sinful world, both as a Parish and as a Diocese. We just finished our Priests' Retreat for 2018. I have come out of it particularly motivated. Let me share why.

Other ways that trust in Jesus can lead to healing through his Church

8. First is Bishop Strickland's leadership in calling us to be a "teaching diocese." He has instituted the St. Philip's Institute as a means to introduce top level, national quality leadership into our Diocese. Let me share.

9. In marriage and family life. Deanna Johnson is our staff person for this area. We are implementing a new and more comprehensive program for preparation for marriage and marriage enrichment. We as priests on the retreat spent four full hours receiving additional orientation and training in this area.

In relation to the Eucharist, when we come to Mass, one of the first things we do is the Penitential Rite. Every time we do this we should review our marriage and how we have treated others, especially our spouse and our children. Right then we might be prompted to identify something we need to do or apologize for in order to be right with God.

Marriage preparation, sponsors and real formation.

Marriage enrichment using these methods.

Formation of lay couples capable of doing this in this Parish.

We should be a beacon of hope for how to make relationships work – how to have a beautiful marriage and a great family with many children!

10. In dating and in finding a spouse for our children:

In Mass we receive instruction from the Lord on right relationships. We are guided into holiness, purity, and chastity (See especially 1 Thess 4:3-8). When we recognize that God really loves us and wishes us to have wonderful relationships, we can learn how to be protected from lust and sin and how to build a beautiful relationship.

We deal with such issues in Catechism class and in the Sunday preaching. We have resources such as the book, *“How to Find Your Soulmate Without Losing Your Soul.”* We provide personal guidance and counsel for how to make such relationships work out. We participate in youth retreats where our children can learn God’s way of making relationships work. We talk about and reflect on the holiness of our bodies and the right use of our sexuality in the way God designed it to be.

11. In interpersonal relationships and in our relationship with God:

In the Mass we are called to holiness and to examine ourselves in our relationship with others when we pass the peace and when we approach communion. St Paul teaches us that we need to be right with our brothers and sisters, our neighbors before receiving communion (See 1 Cor 11:27-29). If we receive the Body and Blood of the Lord unworthily we will be eating and drinking the judgment of God upon ourselves. We need to be right with God, without shame and guilt, in order to be healthy ourselves and to be in healthy relationships with others. Imitating Jesus means we will be willing “to deny ourselves, to take up our crosses, and follow (obey) Him. What better way to maintain good relationships?

12. In the area of finances and our management of money and possessions:

In the Mass we are called on to plan our finances and our giving, especially our style and cost of living so that we will be prudent, tithing, saving and sharing with others. Our use of money can be a training ground for other things (See Luke 16:9-13). Through this we can avoid being enslaved by debt.

13. Healing: Through the Sacraments.

Reconciliation – This can put our lives in order. Carl Jung observed that only 2% of his patients were practicing Catholics. See my list of “Benefits of Making a Good Confession.” We really can be healed through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist – these sacraments of initiation mark us for God, help to protect us from evil, and instruct us in our Christian life.

Marriage: This puts Christ in our marriage and formalizes our commitment before God. Through this sacrament God strengthens us for a lifetime of love.

14. Major resources for living our Catholic lives:

Adult formation classes.

Resources from Matthew Kelly.

Resources from “Formed” – from the Augustine Institute in Denver.

Resources from “Testimony to Love” for our marriages.

Future resources for formation in discipleship for various parts of the parish.

15. The use of the “Rice Bowl” as a special resource to help us actually “deny ourselves and help others” during Lent.

16. In conclusion:

We know that Jesus has the power to cure every sickness and sin. How can we come closer to Him and trust in Him so that we and others can be healed? How do we think that God wants us to be “salt and light” for St. Boniface, for our community, for our Diocese and for the whole world?