

7th Sunday In Ordinary Time Readings (Year C): 1 Sam 26:2.7-9,22-23;

1Cor 15:45-49 & Lk 6:27-38

Theme: “ LOVE YOUR ENEMIES AND DO GOOD TO THOSE WHO HATE YOU”

Today's gospel reading is a continuation of Jesus' sermon on the Beatitudes in which he challenges his disciples and future disciples to attain perfection/holiness, just like him and his heavenly Father.

Jesus' saying that you should love your enemies and do good to those who hate you help me to understand and appreciate Oscar Wilde's beautiful explanation of this saying of Jesus: "When Jesus says 'Forgive your enemies' it is not for the sake of the enemy, but for one's own sake that he says so, and because love is more beautiful than hate."

Every serious disciple of Christ will honestly admit that Jesus' teachings are really a challenge and difficult to practice. If you still remember the Beatitudes we heard last weekend, it looks like everything the world holds dear/precious namely wealth, power, fame etc, have been turned upside down. Jesus teaches us that the true happiness, joy and peace can't be found in earthly wealth/power except only in God.

In today's Gospel reading according to Luke, Jesus said to his disciples: "To you who hear I say, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you? These are really hard teachings to follow, right? Yes! Fellow parishioners, Jesus would not ask us to do something that is impossible for us to do. Jesus himself practiced exactly what he preached. For instance, even on the Cross, he prayed to his heavenly Father to forgive his enemies.

He is the perfect model for us to follow if we really want to be his faithful disciples. Jesus wants us not only to forgive our enemies but to love them, pray for them and not be judgmental towards them. He wants us to treat them the way we want them to treat us.

This teaching of Jesus for us to love our enemies, pray for them and treat them the way we would like them to treat us is what our world desperately needs to day. If we can all live this teaching of Jesus, we will be living in "a small heaven" here on earth.

One of the uniqueness of Christianity is that it stresses the duty of loving one's enemy and the obligation of unconditional fraternal charity. You do not find this in any religions except in Christianity.

In the First reading, we read of David who lived many years prior to the advent of Jesus and knew how to love his enemies. Many of us know very well of the story of David. David, a shepherd boy whose profound faith in God led him and his people to defeat Goliath, the army general of the Philistines. David became very successful in battlefields which made him a very famous person in Israel and surrounding nations. Unfortunately, King Saul became envious of David and planned to kill David even though Jonathan, Saul's son advised him against this malice.

In today's first reading, we're told David had an opportunity to kill his enemy, Saul, but David refused to do so. David loved his enemy, Saul, and spared his life. David saw Saul as an anointed man of God. Yes, vengeance is not yours but God's alone. How many of us will honestly do what David did? Remember, David who has no military training took a risk to lead his people to fight Goliath and his armed military men.

I believe because of David's compassion and love even for his enemies, God has showered abundant blessings upon him. He was able to unite both the Northern and Southern Kingdom of Israel into one strong Kingdom of Israel. He ruled for 40 years before his death. He is still remembered as a great King in Israel up today. If David, Paul and many holy men and women did live Jesus' teachings, we can also do so by grace of God.

St. Paul reminds us in the second reading, we should try every day to grow into the likeness of Jesus, the risen Lord. By loving our enemies, praying for them, avoid judging them and treating them as Christ will treat them, we are growing into the likeness of Jesus. Through this, the world will know we are Christians by words and deeds

May Holy Mother Mary and her husband beloved, St. Joseph, pray for us to be able to live this teaching of their beloved Son, Jesus Christ.