

Connecting With the Sunday Readings

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

In today's Gospel, Jesus warns his Apostles about what to expect as he sends them out to proclaim the Good News. Jesus makes it clear that the task will be difficult. It will require that their commitment be stronger than anything else in their lives, even stronger than the bond between a parent and a child. Then he explains that although the mission will be difficult, the rewards are beyond measure. Not only will the Apostles be rewarded, but those who help them will be rewarded as well.

In this message, Jesus reminds us all that we cannot always be takers. To "take up his cross" and follow Jesus means that we need to be both givers and receivers. When we give to one another, we learn how to receive from God. In giving to one another, we learn the self-giving that defines a disciple of Jesus. In giving, we learn that we can be the Presence of Jesus to others. Our giving and receiving is not only about ourselves and others, but about Jesus.

A Gospel Word for the Home

Matthew 10:37-42

Our relationship with Jesus ought to be the most important one in our lives. All other relationships should evolve from our relationship with him. Because of our relationship with Jesus, we can choose to lose our life both for him and for others, just as he gave his life for us. As Jesus explains in the Gospel, if we do this, our reward will be great.

It is important for us to regularly assess our relationship with Jesus. We need to honestly reflect on what is at the center of our lives. All too easily, all kinds of things can stand between us and our relationship with Jesus. For example, work, money, children, spouses, health issues, children's activities, cell phones, internet, ambition, or friends. If any one of these becomes an all-consuming focus, it can distract us from legitimate responsibilities and healthy relationships. Any one of these can push Jesus and living as his disciple to the margins of our lives.

Parent Survival

In this Gospel, Jesus states that he is to take priority in our lives above everyone and everything else, even family. But that does not mean that we walk away from our family or ignore the needs of others. In fact, it is the exact opposite. It is serving others and giving to others that exemplifies that Jesus is the center of our lives. In giving and receiving, we find the purpose of our lives, Jesus. How does your relationship with Jesus affect your parenting? How does it affect your relationship with your spouse?

Car or Meal Talk

In today's Gospel, Jesus urges us to put him above everyone and everything, even family. Invite family members to share how focusing on Jesus can help your family to be more loving to one another.

One-Line Prayer

Loving and generous God, send your Holy Spirit upon us so that we can faithfully love Jesus above everything and everyone.