

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time [a]

June 22, 2008

Readings

Jeremiah 20:10-13

Romans 5:12-15

Matthew 10:26-33

Calendar

June 20: World Refugee Day

June 21: Start of Summer in the Northern Hemisphere

June 26 - United Nations Day Against Torture <http://www.ircct.org/default.aspx?ID=766>

Quotes

"The rush and pressure of modern life are a form of its innate violence. To allow myself to be carried away by a multitude of conflicting concerns. To surrender to too many projects, to want to help everyone in everything...is to succumb to violence. The frenzy of the activist...destroys the fruitfulness of one's own work because it kills the root of inner wisdom which makes work fruitful."

Thomas Merton

It is not wrong to want to live better; what is wrong is a style of life which is presumed to be better when it is directed towards "having" rather than "being", and which wants to have more, not in order to be more but in order to spend life in enjoyment as an end in itself. It is therefore necessary to create life-styles in which the quest for truth, beauty, goodness and communion with others for the sake of common growth are the factors which determine consumer choices, savings and investments.

John Paul II, Centesimus Annus, 36

Do not let a desire for wealth cause you to become so consumed by your work that you prevent happiness for yourself and your family.

Thich Nhat Hanh

At a time of rampant individualism, we stand for family and community. At a time of intense consumerism, we insist it is not what we have, but how we treat one another that counts. In an age that does not value permanence or hard work in relationships, we believe marriage is forever and children are a blessing, not a burden. At a time of growing isolation, we remind our nation of its responsibility to the broader world, to pursue peace, to welcome immigrants, to protect the lives of hurting children and refugees. At a time when the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer, we insist the moral test of our society is how we treat and care for the weakest among us. In these challenging days, we believe that the Catholic community needs to be more than ever a source of clear moral vision and effective action. We are called to be the "salt of the earth" and "light of the world" in the words of the Scriptures (cf. Mt 5:13-16).

US Bishops, Communities of Salt and Light

<http://www.osjspm.org/cst/csl.htm>

The worsening scandal of hunger is unacceptable in a world which has the resources, the knowledge, and the means available to bring it to an end.

Benedict XVI, 8 January 2007

Thoughts for your consideration

Fear gets in the way of trust.

Worry about possessions, control, status, and the like gets in the way of living the Christian life.

Jeremiah is able to speak out because he trusts that God is his strength rather than his status in the community or the opinion of others.

Jesus seems to be telling the disciples that they will be able to speak the message when they trust that God is with them and when they understand that they are of more value than anything else in God's creation.

If we are to live out the teaching of Jesus, we must let go of all those things that get in the way of life - that ask for our trust but are less than God. We are called to let go of consumerism and a trust in material possessions. We are called to see our infinite value as children made in God's goodness. We are called to get our strength not from the weapons of violence or the power of political control. We get our strength from the "grace of God."

The Spirit calls us to speak up in word and action. As we try to live out the social teaching of the church, we are invited to "speak in the light" and "proclaim on the housetops" both in our words and in our actions. We are invited to speak up for what we believe. We cannot do this unless we trust God and let go of all that gets in the way of this trust.

Questions for Reflection in your Faith Sharing Group

Do you have any fears that keep you from living the Christian life?

What are they? Where do they come from? Can you let go of them?

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What are the issues or situations that call for people to speak out today?

What are the local issues in your community that call for people to speak up?

Actions – Links

World Food Crisis- The Center of Concern's has prepared a resource designed to provide a clear overview of the current food crisis and the conflicting economic forces at work behind the scenes. You can read it at <http://www.coc.org/system/files/FoodCrisis08.pdf>

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“Crazy Facts”

A NY Times editorial on April 10, 2008 wrote: “Even the poorest fifth of households in the United States spend only 16 percent of their budget on food. In many other countries, it is less of a given. Nigerian families spend 73 percent of their budgets to eat, Vietnamese 65 percent, Indonesians half. Last week, the president of the World Bank, Robert Zoellick, warned that 33 nations are at risk of social unrest because of the rising prices of food.”

Prayers of Intercession

Response: God, help us to act with and speak out with those in need.

With those who are hungry today, we pray....

With those who are sick and infirmed, we pray....

With those who have no political power, we pray....

With those who are immigrants and refugees, we pray....

With those who live in fear of terrorism or violence, we pray.....

Prayers

A Prayer in Honor of Mary's Courage

From http://www.beliefnet.com/prayeroftheday/prayer_one.asp?pid=1998

Mary,
you heard a voice.
You answered, "Yes,"
risking shame and disgrace,
ridicule and rejection.

Still, you said, "Yes."
Yes, to the promise
you received from God.
Yes, to the birth
of a firstborn son.
Let your trust be our inspiration,
your faith
be our guide,
your hope
our course for courage.
This we ask
in the name of the child
you bore,
the Savior of the world,
who came
through God's abiding love
and your spoken word.
Yes.
So be it.
Amen.

- Vienna Cobb Anderson

My Lord God,
I have no idea where I am going
I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know for certain where it will end.
Nor do I really know myself,
And the fact that I think I am following
your will does not mean that I am
actually doing so.
But I believe that the desire to please
you does in fact please you.
And I hope that I have that desire in all
that I am doing.
And I know that if I do this, you
will lead me by the right road
though I may know nothing about it.
Therefore will I trust you always
though I may seem to be lost
and in the shadow of death, I will
not fear, for you are ever with me
and you will never leave me
to face my perils alone.

- *Thomas Merton*