

23rd Sunday C

CHRIST WHO GAVE ALL

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www.sjti.ac.za/resources_homily.htm

First Reading: Wisdom 9:13-18

Response: “**O Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to the next**” (Ps.89:1)

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 89:3-6,12-14,17

Second Reading: Philemon 9-10,12-17

Gospel: Luke 14:25-33

The Risen Lord, אָדוֹן נְעוֹר , 'Adon Ne'or, gave us his all on earth that we might have all with him in heaven. We share in his life, death and resurrection, as he journeys with us through life. We beseech the Lord to guide us and he gives us true wisdom.

True wisdom is a divine gift enabling us to “**know the intentions of God**” (Wis.9:13). Solomon, to whom the book of Wisdom alludes, was given the “**the holy spirit from above**” (Wis.9:17).

Among the gifts of the Holy Spirit is wisdom, giving us light as we journey through our pilgrim life on earth, in “**this tent of clay that weighs down the teeming mind**” (Wis.9:15).

God is always there showing us the way. “**In the morning you fill us with your love**” (Ps.89:14), a love that guides our destiny to the Promised Land.

Time on earth is a pilgrimage to heaven. We are made in the image of God, not built for time but for eternity. “**To your eyes a thousand years are like yesterday**” (Ps.89:4).

Paul imprisoned in Rome, sees himself “**a prisoner of Christ Jesus, weighed with chains**” (Phm.1:9). He converts a runaway slave, Onesimus, to Christ, in whom all are free and equal.

He sends Onesimus back to Philemon, his master, whom he advises to receive him “**not as a slave, but as a dear brother in the Lord**” (Phm.1:16). Such is the Kingdom, the grace of God.

The Gospel portrays the Kingdom as following Christ who gave us all. It challenges us to do the same. Who does not “**carry the cross and come after me cannot be my disciple**” (Lk.14:27).

Such a challenge is sacrifice. “**None can be my disciple unless he gives up all his possessions**” (Lk.14:33), not half-hearted commitment, like the “**man who started to build and was unable to finish**” (Lk.14:28).

Scripture: Jesus came and gave us all. Read what the Gospel (Luke 14:25-33) asks of us.

Liturgy: Jesus gives himself to us in the Eucharist. Consider what we give at the Offertery.

Doctrine: Consider the sacrifice of Christ. *What is our sacrifice?*

Witness: *How committed am I to Lord? What should I be doing?*

FOR THE CHILDREN:

Read and share the Gospel of the day (Luke 14:25-33) with the children. *What are we to do?*

Reflect upon moments in Mass where Jesus offers himself and when we can make our offering.

Share and give Teaching on the importance of giving and receiving, acceptance and sacrifice.

Speak to God about the gifts you need and how you will use them in serving him and neighbour.

FOR TEENAGERS: (Shared Christian Praxis)

What are your notions of giving, in terms of sacrifice, offering and commitment?

Share some of your moments in receiving and giving what is important to you.

What does the Church teach about sharing, giving and receiving?

How much have you been of the mind of Christ and of his Church in your commitments?

Have you any plans on how to work with the Lord in the building of his Kingdom?

RCIA: CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH (CCC)

Mahatma Gandhi, who was a Hindu, called “worship without sacrifice” an absurdity.⁽ⁱ⁾ Perfect sacrifice, for the Christian, is the one Christ offered on the cross. The catechism teaches that “by uniting ourselves with his sacrifice we can make our lives a sacrifice to God” (CCC. 2100).

⁽ⁱ⁾ **HAHN** Scott “**The Lamb’s Supper.**” *Dartman, Longman & Todd, London. 2005. p.26.*

LIFE EXPERIENCE:

Many of the faithful consider their priests to be the most spiritually-gifted and look up to them to share what God has given. They see their priests as mightily empowered in the mysteries of God. On the other hand, the clerical scandals in the Church and cover-ups makes one aware of how the mighty have fallen. The priest must not forget that he is chosen to serve not to be served. Perhaps the media is an eye-opener, revealing chinks in the metal, the mettle of hierarchy. Recently, Zulu newspapers and laity have reported some abuses: financially, sexually, and spiritually, overcharging for blessings, quasi-exorcisms and simony. Some clergy, in spite of warnings, still have children and strangers living in their presbyteries. I say some, not all, for I know many good priests who are an example and inspiration to my vocation. Cardinal Murphy-O’Connor, however, says “It does not matter that the great majority of priests and bishops are good servants and pastors of their people. The scandal of abuse casts its shadow over everything.”⁽ⁱ⁾ Ideally, the answer in this instance, is for the hierarchy to be like Christ, a wounded healer. Christ however, faced the sins that crucified him. The cardinal stressed that issues “must be faced”⁽ⁱ⁾, not cover-ups or ignoring the pain and cry of the laity. Local Church leaders make their presence felt in issues of fundraising and pre-emptive liturgical changes. It seems for them, better for the laity to remain silent in the name of loyalty, an argument that the pope seemingly used on a cardinal when light on a truth that was a cover-up. In the last African Synod, how much did the bishops, who are the successors of the apostles, exercise their authority and leadership, in facing issues at hand, or was it held in Rome to be vetted by the curia or the pope? Indeed, Peter was the head, not a totalitarian way but collegially, not personally supervising every local Church, its council and manipulation of bishops. Are bishops to be the lackeys of the curia? Has the *magisterium* has become the *curia* and nothing more?

⁽ⁱ⁾ **CARDINAL MURPHY-O’CONNOR** *Addresses Ireland’s Priests.* ZENIT. 2010/07/10. World Seen from Rome.

LITTLE ANGELINA:

Angelina’s money box was full. Her family had adopted a mission and each member of the family had a way of giving something. For Angelina, it was her money-box. So when will they be going to deliver their offerings? When will they hear that the priest on the mission has disgraced himself in mismanaging secret funds? “Are these the mighty secrets”⁽ⁱ⁾? Where’s then the mysteries of the Church? No doubt, Angelina will be seen to make better use of her money.

⁽ⁱ⁾ **ARISTOPHANES.** “**The Clouds**” v.852. *Harvard University Press, Cambridge, USA. 1978.* Text of given quote is “**Ταυτ’ εμαθες τα δεξια**” which Benjamin Bickley Rogers freely translates in same edition, as above, page 343.

IMPORTANT WORD: *Onesimus*

Onesimus was Philemon’s runaway slave. His name means “useful.” Paul stresses how useful he can be to Philemon and asks to take him back, not simply as a slave but as a brother in Christ, with whom he can share the gifts of faith and love. Our faith also teaches that we see others not only for their usefulness but how we can be useful to them, not simply for what we can get but for what we can give. Jesus says to us as Paul said to Philemon: “Welcome him as you would me” (*Phm. 1:17*).

Watchword: “**Welcome him as you would me**” (Phm. 1:17)

Hebrew: ת ק ב ל נו כ מ ו נ י Teqablenu kamoni.
Greek: Προλαβου αυτον ως εμε. Proslabou auton hos eme.
Latin: **Suscipe illum sicut me.**
Portuguese: **Recebe-o como a mim mesmo.**
Spanish: **Recibele como a mi mismo.**
French: Reçois-le comme tu me recevrais.
German: **Nimm ihn auf wie mich selbst.**
Afrikaans: **Ontvang hom net soos jy my sou ontvang.**
Zulu: **Uma ngingumngane wakho umamukele njengokungathi yimi.**
Xhosa: **Mamkele kwangalaa ndlela ubuye kundamkela ngayo nam.**
Sotho: **Mo amohele jwalokaha o ne o tla nkamohela.**
Irish: **Cuir failte roimhe, mar a gcuireann sibh failte romham.**