

Word Sharing Circle (WSC) Reflection Guide

13th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Cycle A, Year I)

July 2, 2017

Community Word:

True disciples of Christ bear much fruit.

Theme:

We bear much fruit when our relationship with Jesus is the focal point of our lives.

Promise:

“Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me.” (Mt 10:40)

Reflection:

It is easier to welcome friends than to welcome strangers. We are wary of people we do not know especially during these time when there are possible threats to our safety and our very lives. For example, people would be careful in giving alms to a sunbaked woman carrying a child begging for money, perhaps suspecting her of being used by beggar syndicates. Now a days, it is becoming common to have CCTVs installed in residences and offices as a security measure from burglary and crimes against property and persons. Filipinos are generally a welcoming people, and in town fiestas many still welcome strangers to dine in their homes as is customary. But little by little this is changing because of a culture of mistrust and suspicion that may be slowly creeping into our society today.

In the gospel of the 13th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Jesus is teaching us a different kind of welcoming. We are asked to go beyond our comfort zone to welcome not only those who are close to us, such as our family members, love ones and friends, but to embrace the cross of inconvenience in welcoming those who are “strangers,” in the person of the last, the least and the lost among us. Many might still find it difficult to spend time and resource attending to the needs of the poor, who are sick in hospitals, who are imprisoned, who are recovering from abuse, who are orphaned and abandoned. After all for some, there are more important matters to attend to – family days, scheduled vacation, shopping and other social endeavors.

Jesus is showing us what is essential if we truly want to follow and establish a sincere relationship with him. For it is indeed difficult to take up our cross, to love Jesus more than we love our family. Though he is not telling us to ignore those who we love, we must choose Jesus with the kind of love that he himself exemplified – a selfless, self-giving love, as he chose to die for us because he loved us first. Jesus is teaching us that when we are at a crossroad where we need to choose between the priorities and attachments in this world and Christ’s truth and love, we must choose to act in ways that show that we are truly his disciples.

We cannot go on with life with an “all for myself” attitude. As Christians, the fruit of the Spirit of being kind, generous, gentle and loving should manifest more in our relationship with others. When we develop the habit of being more hospitable, more caring and more attentive to other people’s needs, we strengthen our relationship with Jesus whose generosity cannot be outdone – ***“Whoever gives only a cup of cold water to one of these little ones to drink...he will surely not lose his reward,”*** (Mt 10:42). In the first reading, we see that if you are kind and hospitable, the Lord God will bless you more than what you have given away, because His ***“kindness is established forever”*** and His ***“faithfulness is confirmed in the heavens,”*** (Ps 89:3).

Thus, our theme this week – **We bear much fruit when our relationship with Jesus is the focal point of our lives** – reminds us that if we love Christ above all, we will be worthy of Christ. He will welcome us and we too will be welcomed by the Father. This is the promise of Jesus in Matthew 10:40: ***“Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me.”***

Following Jesus is to die to ourselves, just as Christ died for our sins and rose again that we may live (Rom 6:4). If we die in Christ, then we will live with and in Him. And to be in Christ is to be spiritually fruitful by imitating his ways – being kind, compassionate and giving.

Prayer:

“Dear Jesus, open my eyes that they may see the deepest needs of people; move my hands that they may feed the hungry; touch my heart that it may bring warmth to the despairing; teach me the generosity that welcomes strangers. Let me share my possessions to clothe the naked; give me the care that strengthens the sick; make me share in the quest to set the prisoner free. In sharing our anxieties and our love, our poverty and our prosperity, we partake of your divine Presence.”

Reflection Questions:

1. What do you feel in a situation when you have to give up your comfort and convenience to attend to a person in need?
2. When being hospitable to a person you do not know, do you perceive that behind the face of that stranger is the face of Jesus?

This Week’s Daily Mass Reading Guide:

July 2, 2017 (Sun) - 2 Kgs 4:8-11,14-16/Ps 89:2,3,16-19/Rom 6:3,4,8-11/Mt 10:37-42

July 3, 2017(Mon) - Eph 2:19-22/Ps 117:1, 2/Jn 20:24-29

July 4, 2017(Tues) - Gn 19:15-29/Ps 26:2-3, 9-12/Mt 8:23-27

July 5, 2017(Wed) - Gn 21:5, 8-20/Ps 34:7, 8, 10-13/Mt 8:28-34

July 6, 2017 (Thur) - Gn 22:1-19/Ps 115:1-6, 8, 9/Mt 9:1-8

July 7, 2017 (Fri) - Gn 23:1-4, 19; 24:1-8, 62-67/Ps 106:1-5/Mt 9:9-13

July 8, 2017(Sat) - Gn 27:1-5, 15-29/Ps 135:1-6/Mt 9:14-17

“Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!”