

Word Sharing Circle (WSC) Reflection Guide

14th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Cycle A, Year I)

July 9, 2017

Community Word:

True disciples of Christ bear much fruit.

Theme:

We bear much fruit when we surrender to God's ways.

Promise:

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest." (Mt 11:28)

Reflection:

The unity of our Lord Jesus with his Father is characterized by mutual knowledge and understanding between the Father and the Son – ***"No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son,"*** (Mt 11:27). Jesus attributes the source and power of his preaching and miracles to the Father whom he glorifies. He extends his Father's compassion to the weak and the vulnerable and he offers us a yoke which will fit well and not add to our hardship. Why is Jesus' burden light? Because it is laid upon us in love and is carried by us in love. The love that comes from Jesus makes light even the heaviest burden.

Our theme for this week – **We bear much fruit when we surrender to God's ways** reflects the special invitation of Jesus to us who are suffering and are burdened. Jesus, being meek of heart, compassionate and merciful, comes as the humble Son of God who offers his constant and unconditional love. He yearns to dwell within us so that he may accompany us in our wavering and uncertain steps. He is with us to give us rest and refresh us from our sufferings. He comes to us to lighten our loads, to comfort us in our afflictions, and to console us in our sorrows. Jesus utters these powerful yet gentle words of assurance: ***"Come to me all you who labor and are burdened and I will give you rest,"*** (Mt 11:28). These are words that every person and entire world desperately need to hear. For who is not tired of confronting endless family and financial problems, of being burdened with bitterness, anger, regrets, fears or shame, and of being harassed by the pretensions and falsehood, by addictive materialism and deceptive choices in our society today.

There is so much hope when we hear Jesus say to us: ***"Come to me..."*** We have to learn to let go of our burdens, worries and anxieties and entrust them to God. God is not a mere on-looker to what we are going through. If we join our sufferings with the passion and death of Jesus, there is redemptive purpose and meaning in them. Then we will understand and experience what Jesus means when he says: ***"My yoke is easy and my burden light,"*** (Mt 11:30). 'Yoke' is Jesus law of love, a revelation of truth that love consists of deeds not just words. Jesus is not calling for a heroic "all in" sacrifice, but a gentler call to the day-to-day concern of easing the burdens of others. Jesus is also telling those who are comfortable in life, the wealthy, the privileged, and the gifted ones to ease the burden of the oppressed and marginalized, and to share their time, talent and treasures with the least, the last and the lost.

The yoke of Christ is a 'light burden' because Jesus is carrying it with us, transforming the weight into a sweet experience of rest and peace of mind. For followers of Christ who must bear much fruit, his yoke is the sum total of our responsibility as Christians in whatever state of life God has called us. Sometimes the yoke can be burdensome and we may be tempted

to put it down. But we can choose to take up our cross with joy in our hearts as we work out our salvation and those of others. Jesus takes us for what and who we are.

As Jesus invites us to call upon him and surrender all our cares when we are burdened with life, we are challenged to learn from the Lord and know his gentle heart. Let us take the words of Jesus as words of hope for our restless souls and weary hearts, always keeping in mind his promise the week: **“Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest,”** (Mt 11:28). Then, as we entrust our cares and surrender to God’s ways, we will begin to bear much fruit.

Prayer:

Most gracious Father, comfort those who are cast down and weak of heart amidst their trials and difficulties. Grant that by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit, they may be lifted up to You with hope and courage, and, with gratitude in their hearts, continue to rejoice in Your love along the way. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Reflection Questions:

1. What prevents me from giving my utmost help to comfort and ease the pains of others?
2. In what ways can I demonstrate the comforting love of Jesus to the weary and the needy?

This Week’s Daily Mass Reading Guide:

July 9, 2017 (Sun) - Zec 9:9-10/Ps 145:1, 2, 8-14/Rom 8:9, 11-13/Mt 11:25-30

July 10, 2017(Mon) - Gn 28:10-22/Ps 91:1-4, 14, 15/Mt 9:18-26

July 11, 2017(Tues) - Gn 32:23-33/Ps 17:1-3, 6, 7, 8, 15/Mt 9:32-38

July 12, 2017(Wed) - Gn 41:55-57; 42:5-7, 17-24/Ps 33:2, 3, 10, 11, 18, 19/Mt 10:1-7

July 13, 2017 (Thur) - Gn 44:18-21, 23-29; 45:1-5/Ps 105:16-21/Mt 10:7-15

July 14, 2017 (Fri) - Gn 46:1-7, 28-30/Ps 37:3, 4, 18, 19, 27, 28/Mt 10:16-23

July 15, 2017(Sat) - Gn 49:29-32;50:15-26/Ps 105:1,2,3,4,6,7/Mt 10:24-33

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