

14th Sun A - July 24 – 25, 2017

01. Zech 9:9 – 10; 02. Rom 8:9, 11 – 13; 03. Mt 11: 25 – 30

My Sisters and brothers,

I wish to begin this homily with a story from the life of **St. Mother Teresa**. One day in the Mother House in Calcutta there were about three hundred sisters and novices who were out in the morning for their ministry. The sister who worked in the kitchen came up to Mother and said, **“Mother, we’ve planned poorly. We are running out of food for lunch.”** The situation looked bleak – three hundred plus mouths are coming back in about an hour and a half, and there’s no enough food in the kitchen. Mother’s reaction – her spontaneous reaction – was, **“Sister, you’re in charge of the kitchen this week? Well then, go into the chapel and tell Jesus we have no food.”** Ten minutes later, there was a ring at the door and Mother Teresa was called downstairs. A man she had never seen before was standing at the door. He said, **“Mother, we were just informed that the teachers at the City schools are going on strike. Classes have been dismissed and we have 7,000 lunches we don’t know what to do with. Can you help us use them?”** St. Mother Teresa’s sanctity was built on a very simple foundation of deep faith and trust in God. She turned to Him in prayer at every moment.

We live in a noisy and distracted world. We are surrounded by broken families. We live among people who have given up their faith in God. We meet people who have failed to understand the depth of meaning in the Sacraments. We come across people who entertain doubts about the real presence of Christ in the Holy

Eucharist. We listen to people who question the need of going to confession. We become helpless to give guidance to people who have lost their hope and patience to live for eternal life. In fact, we live in a world that is very badly wounded by sin. As a result, people lack peace, feel burdened and find it hard to carry on. Jesus's invitation in today's Gospel is the need of the time, may be more than ever.

In today's Gospel Jesus tells us, **“Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest” (Mt 11:28)**. This is an invitation that only Jesus can make for he is the only one who can help us enjoy his healing touch. We need Him. Our world needs His healing touch. He invites us to spend some time with him in silence. Much of our problems will find a solution in His presence. God speaks in the silence of our hearts. The word of God teaches the need to spend time in silence before God. In the Gospel of Luke Jesus tells Martha, **“Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her” (Lk 10:41-42)**. The better part that Mary chose was to sit at the feet of the Lord to listen to him. Today Jesus calls each one of us by name and tells what he told Martha. We are not able to hear His voice because we have lost the need and meaning of silence. Technologies have helped us but they have also destroyed us. To listen to God, one must enjoy silence. **Psalm 46:10 says, “Be still, and know that I am God!”** There is this great story about an old man that St. John Mary Vianney found in the Church just staring at the tabernacle. The priest asked him what he was doing and the man explained, **‘I look at him and he looks at me.’**

For many people life is a burden. Jesus' invitation, **“Come to me”** offers something more to life. Our life is not over with the problems we face, the struggles we go through, the tensions we encounter, the pains we bear, the misunderstandings we meet with. There is more to life. Prayer, for most people, is a struggle – a struggle to balance between the noise of the world and the silence of the heart, to balance between the outer and the inner man, or as St. Paul would say a struggle between **“the flesh and the spirit”** (Gal 5:17). **St. Pope John Paul II says, “Life changes when the heart of man has been ‘conquered’ by Christ. The most generous and lasting choices are the fruit of a deep and prolonged union with God in prayerful silence”** (Sunday Angelus, 24 February 2002). This came from a man who helped defeat Communism, and combatted a culture increasingly set against Christian virtues and values. **St. Mother Teresa once remarked, “The essential thing is not what we say, but what God says to us in silence.”**

My sisters and brothers, after having lived on this earth, if we have to lose our eternal life, we are of all people most to be pitied. We are fighting not a losing battle but a winning battle. Let us accept the invitation of Jesus. Let us give him what we have – our brokenness, our sinfulness, our let-downs and accept from Him what he has.

God bless