

## Homily

10<sup>th</sup> Sunday in OT, June 10, 2018

My younger son got married two weeks ago. At the reception, my wife, Donna, and I admired the fun everyone was having, including my older son, who got married a year ago. It was great to see my two sons, their wives, our extended family and all of their many friends talking, dancing, laughing and bonding. Old friends, new friends, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins, parents, and grandparents. Our other new daughter was sitting with Donna and me, watching her husband of a year, our older son, having fun on the dance floor with all the kids and all his friends. She said to us with a loving smile and a twinkle in her eye, "it's obvious I didn't marry him for his dancing skills." As we were preparing to leave, my younger sister, who lives in Indianapolis with her husband and four kids, and I were talking about how much we need to get together more often, but it seems we only see each other at weddings and funerals.

Relationships. Some of them we have automatically, like our parents, brothers and sisters. Others we develop over time through school, work, church.

But most of the time, these relationships require work; it rarely seems to be easy. And it seems like the closer we are, the more often we argue; the more we love someone, the more we struggle in that relationship.

Today, Jesus sends us a message about relationships. He comes home only to find his relatives, his family, those who knew him as he was growing up, preparing to seize him, saying he was possessed and evil. Sounds like some of my family gatherings.

He goes on to talk about a kingdom being divided, a house divided, a family divided. It cannot stand; it will fold, fall apart.

In the first reading, we hear of the original fall; the greatest, saddest, but necessary fall. Adam severed that most precious relationship of all, between God and his greatest creation.

Relationships are so important. If we don't have a positive relationship with our family, our family falls apart. And the relationship Jesus is talking about today is a relationship with him.

But sometimes, when Jesus is speaking in parables, his message can get confusing. In the Gospel, it sounds like Jesus is pushing his family away. So we need to look closer at what Jesus means when his family is outside and he asks, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And said those seated in a circle around him "are my mother and brothers."

Jesus wants us to be close to him. This we can see clearly by his looking at those seated in the circle around him. But how can we, 2000 years removed from the scene, sit near him? Touch him? Hear him?

“For whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.”

At the transfiguration, God tells Peter and the other apostles, “This is my son, whom I have chosen; listen to him.”

And Jesus commands us to love the lord our God and love our neighbor as ourselves. That includes our enemies. And it includes people we don’t even know, those we haven’t met yet.

He further tells us unless we eat the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood, we will not have life within us.

The only way we can be a friend to Jesus is to love God, love our neighbor, listen to Jesus, eat his flesh and drink his blood.

Sound familiar? Isn’t that what we do every time we come to Mass? We gather as a family gathers together. We listen to scripture, the story of God’s love for us. And we share a meal; we join together as a single body, the body of Christ, his bride and we receive Christ, here at the table of the altar, His body, blood, soul, divinity. We touch Christ in the most intimate way.

And then we are sent. The dismissal isn’t an ending to this family gathering; it’s a directive, a command to go forth and continue this relation we shared here. To share the same with those out there. Our mother, brother and sister.

We are living in the New Evangelization, the hope and desire of the Church to yield even greater harvests for Christ.

That is our mission as sons and daughters of God, our loving Father; to bring more sons and daughters to God.

That is our mission as fully initiated members of the Body of Christ; to evangelize; to invite all people to become members of the Body of Christ.

That is our calling as mother and brother and sister of Jesus; to develop that relationship so that we all can be one with Christ.

This is our take-away today. We are fed by the Word of God who tells us to do the will of God. We are fed by the Body of Christ who became the One Sacrifice out of His love for us so that we can be one with God and each other.

Our challenge today; first, to strengthen our relationship with someone we know. Maybe it’s someone in our family or a friend we haven’t talked to in a while. It takes work to maintain a relationship. And second, to make a new relationship. We all have busy lives. We go to work or school and we meet people all over the place as we go about our busy lives. Take that extra few seconds to smile and say, “Hi,” to the person standing in line with you or bringing food to your table at the restaurant. Make a new friend. Ask for his or her name; ask how their day is going; offer to pray for them.

It takes work, but it is so very worth it. It is by being mother and brother and sister that we attain eternal life.