

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time – Cycle C

July 11th, 2010

Fr. Larry Richards

Good morning. Last week as you all know I was in Germany with Fr. Kesicki. It was a great experience. We had some fine times as I talked about last Saturday. I got to spend some time in Dachau, there was a Carmelite Monastery there. One of the things I that's there that is everywhere else throughout Germany is we had a lot of street people. One of the things they have over there is you are allowed to bring your dog everywhere, to restaurants, on the train, every where they all have their dogs. All of the homeless people when they are begging have their dogs too. That is a terrible thing you know because the dog looks at you with the eyes and it is another way of getting more stuff. But anyway as I was seeing all of the beautiful churches in Germany, the ones I saw make ours look like a dump by far. Every time I walked in, everything is in old baroque. There is so much to look at it was like whoa! The last day I was there we had a hotel right across the train station in Munich. While we were over at the train station and it was 9:30 at night, there was this little old lady and she is going through all the garbage cans of the train station. Fr. Michael and I walked by, and as I walked by I was going over to the hotel because we were going to leave the next morning at 4 o'clock in the morning, and God says, "I want you to go back and I want you to take care of that woman." I kept walking and He says, "I said to go back and take care of that woman." GRRR!!! Okay so I went back and I said, "Here," and she was talking to someone, and I gave her 10 lire and I walked away. Fr. Michael looked at me and says "How much did you give her?" And I said, "10 lire." He said, "Oh." Which is about twelve bucks. I said, "Yeah, I kept the twenty for myself." Hmmm. Isn't that something. I am going to hell, right. The reality is when it comes down to it I was more concerned about me than I was about she. Even though the Lord told me to go to go out take care of her. You know she didn't ask me for anything but the Lord said go and take care of her. I opened the wallet and there was a ten, a twenty and a fifty. I kept the fifty for myself too. I thought here you go and then I felt good for about five seconds. I just gave her 10 bucks. I was leaving the next day. Did nothing.

The reality that Christ asks you and me is "Who is your neighbor?" That means who am I in your midst. Who am I? Usually it is the people we don't want to have anything to do with. It's the people that get in our way. It is the people who we would rather, you know we have our plans made for the day, that's what happens to the three people pass before the Samaritan came. Now the priest as he passed by he walked to the other side and so did the Levite. If you know anything about the Jewish people the reason they did that especially if the priest was going to offer sacrifice, if that man was dead, and he'd touched the corpse, he would have been made unclean and could not offer sacrifice in the Temple. That is why he could not go to that side because he thought the man was dead. So what he did was he thought, of course, the priest reading a lot into this, "I have to do my thing. I have to do what God is calling me to do. What I need to do is offer sacrifice. I cannot touch that dead body or I will be made unclean." The Levite the same thing. But, when the Samaritan came, now again the Samaritans are people who the Jews hated. They thought they were the lowest of the scum of the earth. They didn't worship the way they worshipped. So the Jews were the great ones and the Samaritans are all going to hell it doesn't matter. It is Jesus purposely who picks the Samaritan and He says, "The Samaritan when out of his way and reached out to that person."

So it must be for us. We need to get out of the way we do things and make sure we are listening to God. He is telling us to go out of our way for someone else. One of the greatest things I can ever talk about or I can think of, to me the greatest thing that shows you are a follower of Jesus is you are a person of generosity. Not just generosity with your money but that is part of it of course because you aren't generous with anything else if you aren't generous with your money. That is just a symptom of your generosity. You have to be generous with your time. That means you have got to do things you would rather not do. You don't do the things you like to do. Some people think they are generous because they are doing what they like to do. The priest was doing what he liked to do. Let us look at priests, me. I can be very selfish. All priests could be very selfish. Priesthood could be the most selfish vocation in the world. You do what you want. You don't have to take care of any kids. You don't have to take care of a wife. You don't have to listen to any wife every day either. It is a very selfish life if you do things your way. I could be a priest every day, do all of the things I am called to do, say Mass for you, do a Holy Hour, all of the things I am called to do and still go to hell because I did what I thought I wanted to do for generosity. Look how generous I am. I am a celibate. I've got to do this, I've got to do that and go to hell because I am not generous in what God calls me to be generous to. What that means is you and I have to go out of our way and we have got to be open to what the Lord tells us to do something we do it. That we give our life away every day in ways we don't want to. If we give our lives away as we want to again, it can be part of a selfishness, it can be part of what we want to do.

Every one of the people except the Samaritan who let this person get into his life and change the direction of his life that day. Everybody else went and did what they needed to do. The Samaritan went stopped, got interested in the person and then took care of that person. He put that person before himself. That is what we must do. After Jesus looks at you and I and says, "Who was our neighbor?" And they said, "The one who treated him with mercy," or the old line use to be compassion. Then what does Jesus say, "Go and do the same," or go and do likewise, whatever you want to say. That is what the command of God to you and me today. He wants you and me to be generous. He wants you and me to give away our life. He wants you and me to be so in tune with Him that when He tells us to do something we do it. We don't just do it a little bit. Oh, I gave \$10. We do it lavishly. We take care of that person as if that person was Christ, Himself, because that person is.

The other day when I was in Munich and I gave that woman \$10 and I kept the other \$70 for myself that is what I did to Christ. Here Jesus \$10 aren't you excited. \$70 for me. What a selfish person. The Lord, the God of the universe calls me. calls you, calls all of us to listen to this, to be generous, lavishly generous. Why? Because that is what He did to us. Because of course the Samaritan, the person on the side was Christ when we deal with them. The Samaritan was also Christ, Himself. It is Christ who goes out of His way for you. It is Christ who goes out of His way for me. It is Christ that gives us more and keeps the least for Himself. It is Christ who dies for you so that you might live. Now go and do the same. May each of you know His love today and forever amen.