

June 9, 2013

10<sup>th</sup> Sunday Ordinary Time - Cycle C

Fr. Larry Richards

Good morning. Today we hear in the Gospel and we hear in the Second Reading, first we are going to start with the Second Reading. The Second Reading, St. Paul talks about that this Gospel he has proclaimed isn't from any human being. He didn't get it from a human being. He got it from Revelation of Jesus Christ. Now this is important because everything falls on to this. That what we believe in our faith is revealed to us by God. We don't tell Him. Now again all you have to do is look at, you know, the books at any book store and everything else, self-help and the theology books and the big thing today is I am not religious but I am spiritual. Right? And so you know we have all of this spirituality stuff. And so what it is is someone comes and says ok this is who I believe God to be and they preach it and they teach it and people follow them. It is a great thing. But it is not God, it is someone's opinion. Right?

You know this morning when I went to the Word of God, I came to Timothy. And it says, "Preach the Word. Remember to hold on to what I revealed to you," and then it went on to say in Timothy it says, "Many people in the later days will be drawn away by many people who will tickle their ears." And people love to go to church to have their ears tickled, to tell me only good things. To only tell me things that make me feel all fluffy inside. And so this spirituality is everywhere and everybody runs to it. And already Paul was talking 2000 years ago that these things would happen. And they have happened throughout the centuries. But like when people used to come, I used to teach at Prep and I would sit there and say this is you know who God is. And someone would raise their hand and say, "Father I don't believe that." And I would say, "Well nobody really cares what you believe." God tells us who He is and we say yes I accept it or no. And then we create our own little idols. But that isn't God. It is our projection of what we hope God to be. What we desire God to be and we make God in our own image. And so that is not revelation.

We first of all have to be making very sure that what we believe is what has been revealed to us through God. Again the opening line of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, John Paul wrote. It says that defending the deposit of the faith is the mission entrusted by God to His Church. That the number one mission of the Church is to guard revelation. That what God taught us because He teaches us to care for our neighbor. To love one another. That God is love. So what we need to do is be faithful to what God revealed Himself to be, first of all.

Now what does God reveal Himself to be? Well that is where we get the prophets. And we go to the Old Testament prophet and then we get THE Prophet, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Himself. And so today it reveals something to us about who God is. Well what it reveals to us is in the Old Testament and the New Testament today, when God is confronted with death, He brings life out of it. And that is who God is. God is a God of life. God is a God who meets us where we are even if where we are is death and He brings life out of it. That is His desire. That is what a prophet does. So He sits there in the Old Testament and He says He sees this boy. The boy is dead. The prophet comes and He puts Himself over him. He breathes life back in to him. He gives him back to his mother. And then the mother says, "Now I know you are from God." How does she know He is from God? Because He brought life out of death. Jesus, "Do not weep," He says to the woman. He stops the procession of the dead boy. And He brings life to that dead boy and gives him back to his mother. That our God is the God of Life.

Now what does that mean for us? First of all it means that God wants to give life to those things in our life which still live in death. Our sinfulness. Our darkness. Where we only focus on ourselves. We focus on the darkness around us. He wants to enter in to our hearts and He wants to bring life to that if we let Him. He won't force Himself on us. So the first thing we have to do is make sure we are surrendering ourselves and letting Him and desiring Him and asking Him to heal the death inside each of us. And the wages of sin is death so that means first of all with our sin. And again we can't just give Him part of it. We have to give Him all of it. We have to give it all to Him, holding nothing back.

But second, with that is that each of us, when we were baptized we are baptized priest, prophet, and king. Priest, prophet and king. As prophets we are called to bring God's power, His word, His presence to the people. And so then what we are called to do is if the prophets would bring life to others, we need to be life giving people. Not death dealing people. Again as I have been talking on getting ready for the new book to come out, I was talking the other day and I was just being very clear and I have talked about it here a couple times that too often in the Catholic Church and us, the members of the Catholic Church, the world knows what we are against. Correct? Everybody knows it. Everybody knows we are against abortion. Everybody knows we are against active homosexuality. Everybody knows we are against divorce and remarriage outside the Church. Everybody knows we are against sex before marriage. Everybody knows we are against people getting drunk. Everybody knows we are against missing Mass on Sunday. Everybody in the world knows it.

But does the world know what we are for? Does the world know that we are for life? We are for love? We are for, in the midst of darkness, bringing hope to people who have no darkness. Does the world know it? And the best way to find out is can the people who you know it from your life? So the people you have at work and you meet at work, do they know you are a Catholic or a follower of Jesus? And do they know that because your life giving? Or do they know you are the most judgmental person they know? You are always for what we are against. That's a sin. That is wrong. Oh I can't handle those people. Those people gossip. So we remove ourselves from the people because we are being judgmental. Instead Jesus ate and drank with the sinners. So do we meet people where they are and bring hope and life into their darkness? Is that the kind of prophet we are? Or are we only the kind of prophet that speaks what is negative? We need, and I need to do this myself more than any of you, we need to make sure that what we are, are the prophets who bring life to the death.

There again, people come to me and say, "Father my marriage is over." "Is it?" "It is dead Father." I say, "Well you know, if you submit it to Christ, Christ rose from people who were dead and brought life to them. If your marriage is dead, instead of going around and saying, 'My marriage is dead, my marriage is dead'... okay we got it. And your spouse got it too. Why don't you invite Jesus into it and bring life out of it? Why don't you allow Christ bring resurrection to your marriage which you think is dead?" Or people sit there and say, "Well Father this part of me is dead. I can't deal with it. I have always given in the same stuff. I can't..." Well, why don't you, instead of complaining about it and acknowledging what is dead, why don't you start inviting the God of life in to it to bring resurrection out of it?" Why aren't we people who believe that God can do anything? Why aren't we people who believe in the power of the resurrection? The power of life and we proclaim by the way we live, by the way we talk, by the way we think.

Have we cursed the world or are we bringing hope and life and healing to the world? Jesus who is God, when He was confronted with death, brought life. We who are the prophets of God, and every one of us are, don't look at the other ones and say well they are, I am not. You are prophet of God by virtue of your baptism. So you and I are called to bring the life of God to the world. To bring the truth of God to the world. And of course the truth is also that you are against abortion. It is there and we need to proclaim that. But we need to make sure that before we only complain when it's wrong, we have to complain what is right too. We have to bring them hope in the darkness. And when people know that in Christ there is life, then they are going to run away from the darkness. They are not going to cling to it. They are only going to cling to it thinking if I come out of the darkness, when I encounter Christ, all he is going to do is judge me too because that is what His followers have done throughout the years. We have judged people in their darkness so they are not comfortable to come out of it. Because when they come before us we make them feel worse. We are called to be the people who want to set them free from their death and bring them to true life in Christ Jesus. So be the prophet God created you to be. You got it? Get it? Going to do it? May each of you know His love today and forever, amen.