

July 6, 2014

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time - Cycle A

Fr. Larry Richards

Good Morning. Today in the Second Reading it talks about The Holy Spirit and it talks about the flesh and it begins in the good side. It says, "You are not in the flesh, you are in the spirit." But then it talks about how we have to put to death the flesh in our life and different things. That is what I want to focus on this day. It's about living a life of the Holy Spirit. Today, we have two children that are going to be baptized right? Ramona Lourdes, correct, and Wyatt Michael. And what's going to happen, one of the first things that happens after they're cleansed of original sin, is they become temples of what? The Holy Spirit. So what that means is the God of the Universe takes up residence inside of them and then he stays in them. Correct? And He never leaves them, correct? Absolutely! So if that's with these two children, the same with us. We have God. We have talked about this so many times, but I want to focus on a very different way this day.

God lives inside of us. Is that true? Audience: Yes. Yes, now God lives inside of us, Holy Cow, is God stronger than the devil? Audience: Yes. Is God stronger than the flesh? Audience: Yes. Is God stronger than your weakness? Audience: Yes. Then why do we focus on weakness and ourselves instead of the power of God living inside of us? See that's what Paul is trying to get into the heads of these people. But too often people only focus on their sinfulness, their weakness, their struggles, you know, that's all I am, and they stay focused on that and yet God has given us Himself inside of us. And so if God lives inside of us, we have the greatest power in the universe inside of us. But the devil keeps us focused on ourselves our sinfulness and all these other things instead of God dwelling inside of us.

And yet, and if what we believe about these two children and what the Church teaches, the Holy Spirit dwells in them, that means the whole Trinity, He brings the whole God of the Universe inside, then that stays with us all the days of our life, forever, and ever and ever. We become one with this, so the greatest thing that happens to us is baptism. And so now though, this is the thing, we have to live it. But the first thing we have to do to really live in the spirit, not of the flesh, is we have to repent and kill the things of the flesh in our life.

Now, when we deal with this, like I'm dealing with men as I have dealt with throughout the years, men usually when they come to confession are 99.9% always focused on the sins of the flesh, and they think that the sins of the flesh are only sexual sin. And so if they are good in everything else, except for the sins of the flesh, people come in and say "Father, it's been two weeks," you know how much I love that, "and I had a sexual thoughts" or whatever. And I go, "Is there anything else?" "No I can't think of anything, Father," and that drives me insane.

Because they stay focused on themselves and that physical sin when they're still yelling at their wives, when they're still gossiping, when they are still petty, when they still get angry, but they don't see those sins at all. They just see the sins of the flesh that they fail on.

Well, sin, ladies and gentlemen, is much more than sexual sin. And that's why Pope Francis keeps talking about these things. And you know people, even the conservatives, are saying explicitly, "Why don't you mind your own business?" Because why, it was great and easy when the Pope talked about sexual sin. But now he's talking about greed, and he's talking about all these other things, and they're saying, "Mind your own business Holy Father. Go back to talking about those things." Because when we are not looking at our own sins, we have plenty of time to judge other people and their sins. And so we really need to look at our sinfulness and put it to death and that's beyond, as I said, the sin of the flesh of sexuality. You know it can be our anger, it can be our impatience, it can be our gossip; it can be our greed, you know, fill in the blanks. Fill in the blanks.

And so what we need to do first is ask the Holy Spirit to reveal that to us. Reveal to me what is still in my flesh and how I still live in my flesh, my sinfulness. And then, kill it! Don't you kill it, let God kill it. But you have to first acknowledge it and repent of it. Not making an excuse for it. Again often when I am giving this type of homily, some of you wives are saying I hope the husband is listening to this one, instead of, "Oh what do I need to do to repent." So again, this isn't a time to be judging others and thinking, this is a time of self-reflection for a moment - what is it in my life that I need to get out of my life which is still in the flesh which I need to give over to the Holy Spirit so the Holy Spirit can kill it, and then I can start living in the Holy Spirit? And so for the first part, we have to let the Holy Spirit kill it, repent of it and ask God to kill it.

The second thing we need to do is completely, fully, 100% surrender everything in my life and everything that I have and all that I am, everything to the Holy Spirit and His power. And then when I do that, and both of those things, I hand over control with surrender, but now God is in charge of my flesh. We don't have these darned excuses we make every time we go to confession, "Oh I'm just weak Father, I can't get over this." Shut up! You're much more than weak. You have God inside of you and if God has power and He has great power, then you and I need to look at the God of the Universe living inside of us and stop looking at ourselves.

Again someone says, "Oh Father, Father, I say that prayer of the Holy Spirit every day and I ask the Holy Spirit," as he looks up, "to help me." And I say, "That's your problem, you're looking up for the Holy Spirit. Look in for the Holy Spirit." If He's up there, he's like that big cheerleader in the sky that says, "Oh come on, you can do it. Oh you messed up there you know!" And that's the way most people live their life. God is up there and He doesn't really care for me. And you know He helps me and He pushes me on, and He says, "Oh I messed up and I'm so He is real disappointed in me." And when we live our life with this exterior reality, that is not what John Paul is saying. He says, "If you don't have the spirit within you, you are not of Christ." Right, is that what he says?

So we have God inside of us, so our job is to look at God, focus on God, not on ourselves, not on our flesh, not on our weakness, focus on Him and give Him full power, complete surrender. It will change your life, but you got to look at Him inside and stop playing a religious game about "I'm trying as best I can." No one is interested. You need to surrender, not try your best. You need to surrender more and give God, who lives inside of you full control. You got it? You get it? You going to do it? May each of you know His love today and forever, amen.