

October 22, 2017 – 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Cycle A  
Fr. Larry Richards

Good morning! How you are? We are blessed! We are grateful to Deacon Patrick for signing the Gospel for us today. Thank you.

I have spoken many times on the Gospel, so I want to just focus on one line in the Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 1:4 and it says “Brothers and sisters loved by God.” And I think this is the most basic thing that we need to know in the faith, is that we were created by God to be loved. We were created by God to be loved. Right? And the basic teaching of the church is, of course, who made me? God. Why did God make me? He made to know Him, to love Him, and serve Him in this world so I can be happy with Him in the next. To know God is to know we are loved because God is love. So it’s got to be the fundamental principle of following God that we know we are loved by God. Now again we have been taught this since we were children and again even though we are taught it, sometimes we hear other things from the pulpit, sometimes we heard other things from apparitions that we see that God is out to get us and that He’s being held back, but oh if He has His way we’re all damned and we are going to hell. Well that’s a little bit different than what we hear in the Gospel. We hear God is love.

And so I think we need to do what we need to do so that we can experience that love. Now the best way to experience the love of God is to do what? Prayer. I should have been a dentist, prayer is the main way we experience the love of God and so we do that. And I’ve taught many years on how to pray. You should know it by now, the best way we have to pray, in my opinion is to take five minutes a day with God beginning by telling Him you’re sorry and go through your sins with Him. Then surrender your life to Him and surrender everything in your life to Him. And then finally asking God to hold you. And spending three minutes every day in the arms of the Father, being loved by the Father, and then with Jesus saying The Lord’s Prayer, concluding that time. But to every day give three minutes in your prayer to letting the God of the Universe embrace you. There you will come to experience the love of God. If you can’t do that for every reason, “oh Father I’ve tried that, it doesn’t work for me.” I would suggest you haven’t tried it enough but let’s go to the next part.

Then you spend time in the Word of God, you go to Google and you put into Google, verses on God’s love. And you go each day and you take a different verse and you meditate on that until one of those grabs your heart and then claim that verse, use that verse. Go to that verse when you’re feeling unloved. Another part specifically that we talked about before here is the verse 1:11, Mark 1:11, where God the Father, when Jesus was baptized God the Father said “you are my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.” That every day you let God say that to you: “You are my beloved son or you are my beloved daughter, with whom I am well pleased.”

Those are the ways if you haven’t experienced the love of God yet, it will at least get you on the road to that. Because most people, you know, I was at a Parish Mission this week in Manchester, Rhode Island and last Saturday I was in Rochester and Friday I was in Rochester

speaking to high school kids and Saturday the men. The number one thing is that 99 percent of the people who go to church haven't a clue that they are loved by God. They just don't. They hope they're loved. They more think that God isn't happy with them, they're more afraid of God. And if that's the point, then we need to get back to basics. So please forgive the very basic, basic, basic homily, but I think it's something we need to come back to again and again. We were created by God to be loved. That's where it begins and we need to do everything in that power to experience that love.

You got it? Get it? Gonna do it? May each of you know His love today and forever, Amen. You get the way I end the homily each week? May of you know His love today and forever, do it, Amen.