

Homily Outline for the 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Cycle B
Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception
October 20, 2024

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- I. Recently before a parish Mass that I was celebrating for a pastoral visit, the priests and I were in the sacristy preparing for Mass, and we were trying to figure out where everyone would sit in the sanctuary.
 - A. One of the altar boys said, "I want to sit in the chair on the right side of the bishop." Another altar boy said, "I want to sit in the chair on the other side of the bishop."
 - B. I looked at the pastor and said, "This sounds familiar!"
- II. In today's Gospel from Saint Mark (Mk 10:35-45), the Apostles James and John come to Jesus, requesting places of honor at his right and left side in glory.
 - A. Little do they know that those places will end up being crosses flanking Jesus' crucified body (15:27).
 - B. Jesus asks them, "*Can you drink the cup and undergo the baptism?*"
 1. Here Jesus uses the images of cup and baptism to refer to the suffering that he will undergo.
 2. Because the disciples misunderstood what Jesus is talking about, they feel confident they can drink this cup and undergo this baptism. Nothing could be further from the truth.
 3. The other ten disciples are indignant with James and John.
 - a) At this point, Jesus intervenes and proclaims his corrective teaching regarding discipleship – which is not about seats of honor and glory but rather serving others and giving one's life for others.
 - b) In other words, discipleship is about imitating Jesus.

- c) The last thing Jesus says is very important: "For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."
- d) This statement is so important that it is included as part of the Roman Catholic rite for the ordination of a priest. James and John totally misunderstood what being a disciple of Jesus means. Glory and honor must be rooted in service.

III. Today is World Mission Sunday.

- A. The theme of the 98th World Mission Sunday is: "Go and invite everyone to the banquet" (cf. Mt 22:9).
- B. The banquet refers to the heavenly banquet to which we are invited to spend eternity with God and all the saints and angels.
- C. The Pontifical Mission Societies for World Mission Sunday explains: "As we embark on this journey together, we ask you not to be mere spectators but active participants in the Church's mission. It is more than an invitation and a call to be part of something greater. This is our moment: together, we can bring hope, faith, and action to every corner of the earth."
- D. How do we do this?
 - 1. We can take a cue from St. Therese of the Little Flower, one of the patron saints of the missions.
 - 2. We have a shrine with her statue and a stained glass window with her image here in our Cathedral.
 - 3. Therese died when she was 24, after having lived as cloistered Carmelite for less than ten years. She never went on missions, never founded a religious order, never performed great works.
 - 4. She is one of the patron saints of the missions because of her special love of the missions, and the prayers and letters she gave in support of missionaries. This is a reminder to all of us who feel we can do nothing, that it is the little things that keep God's kingdom growing.

IV. We have many families with us this morning as we begin Family Fest today.

- A. Families are called to take part in this task of being missionaries.
- B. Parents are missionaries to their children, bringing the Gospel to them by bringing them to the Sacraments, especially to Sunday Mass, and by making your home a place of prayer.
- C. Children can be missionaries, too, by not being afraid to tell your friends that you are Catholic and you love God.
- D. We can all be missionaries, like St. Therese of the Little Flower, through our prayers and support for the work of missionaries throughout the world.

V. This week is Vocations Awareness Week.

- A. This is a good opportunity for families to talk about vocations.
- B. Instead of asking, "What do you want to be when you grow up?", the better question is, "What is God calling you to do with your life?"
- C. In today's Gospel, James and John have it backwards, asking Jesus to do something for them. They should be asking Jesus, "What can we do for you?"
- D. That is the question that each one of us should ask, seeking to do God's will and answer the calling in life that He has for us.

VI. May God give us this grace. Amen.