



ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

THIS SUNDAY February 17 & BEYOND”

“How Do I Come to Trust Someone with my Life?”



You’ve heard of the Sermon on the Mount, and then there is the Sermon on “the Plain” (or better, “at a Level Place” on the hill). Perhaps you know them better as “The Beatitudes” and “The Blessings and Woes.”

This reflection won’t be about those, but since the latter is what you will hear – Luke’s version -- if you attend worship at All Saints’ this Sunday, I do want to say this briefly:

The former is found in Matthew’s Gospel; the latter is found in Luke’s Gospel, at Chapter 6, verses 17-26. For instance, in both, Jesus said, “Blessed are the poor in Spirit,” etc., where you can hear Jesus teaching on both the spiritual and the physical nature of being poor. I commend them to you to organize your life around them. Both have been lifted up as cardinal virtues of life. And you can’t go wrong with following Jesus on these.

Don’t fail to note that before Jesus started his sermon on these virtues and cautions, he healed all who came to him that day, including exorcising demons. It is very important to note that Jesus did not expect that his ministry as Savior could be all that it was supposed to be if only in preaching. God’s power flowed through him for setting people free from physical, psychological, and spiritual problems. This was the precursor to his teaching and preaching. He does want to heal you.

So here, though, is another matter that is so important to us, as well. It shows itself in Sunday’s gospel, even if indirectly. It is the matter of being able to TRUST someone.

The way it shows itself is in the timeframe of Jesus’ ministry to this point. This Sermon at the Level Place is, among other things, the first time that Jesus has taught since he chose who among his disciples would be those identified as “Apostles.” An “Apostle”, to figure out why Jesus would use that designation at all, is simply used to identify a person who has been tasked with being the messenger

of the one who called. With this identification comes the responsibility to share the message accurately and faithfully. You can see it either in the use of the Greek word “apostolos” (so now you know where that English word Apostle came from!), or in the Hebrew word of the same meaning “shalluach”, or sometimes, “shallah.” (probably better to use Apostle; if it were the 12 Shallahs, it might sound like 1950’s doo-wop bands!) Anyway, given this new designation and authority, it is right to consider this first teaching of Jesus with his new apostles as very important in their own learning and formation process.

But here is our reflection question, “How long does it take to build trust in someone else before you “promote” them or identify them as someone you can trust with your very words and your very dreams and hopes and, for Jesus, his very mission?”

The timeline for moving from Disciple – or one who follows and is being taught – to being designated as Apostle is not very long. In Luke, it only takes One Chapter to get from calling disciples until the night Jesus spent in prayer and then announced the twelve the next day. That’s an unfair way of calculating, though. However, even the best of considered calculations mean a period of three months to a year. That’s fast for such trust into promotion. Would you trust someone with your very purpose in life after only three months of knowing them?

Yes, Jesus had the divine ability to read into men’s hearts and minds. He could tell motives; agendas; fears, loyalties. And even with all of that, he listened to the voice of God the Father in prayer before making such a choice of trust. I would be remiss to not say that even Jesus chose someone who would eventually betray him. That will always have to be taken into consideration when you are deciding to trust in someone.

We can, though, make some conclusions for ourselves about the process of coming to trust someone in our lives, like Jesus came to trust those particular twelve, after so little time with them.

First, realize – no, make a powerful commitment to yourself – that the decision to trust someone is both of the heart and of the mind. Don’t leave the other out.

Second, it will take more time than Jesus took. Yes, there are some gifted people out there who can “read” people accurately. The rest of us, though, have to hear those same thoughts and words by taking the time and opportunity for those people to actually say those things out loud in conversation.

Third, like Jesus, you will need to have in your mind just what a trusted person looks like and sounds like, along with certain virtues and life priorities and mission goals. Your discernment and testing will weave in and out of these.

And Fourth, you, like Jesus, can talk to God the Father knowing you have His willing ear; but to know what His counsel is to you, like Jesus, you must know how to listen yourself to God the Father as he speaks to you. And then act on it

Fr. Robert G. Eaton, Interim Rector

Readings for this Sunday – The Sixth Sunday of the Epiphany

Jeremiah 17:5-10 Psalm 1, 1 Corinthians 15:12-20 Luke 6:17-26

CALENDAR

SUNDAY: The Sixth Sunday of the Epiphany

8:30a Low Mass (Church)

10:30a Solemn High Mass (Church)

—The entrance to the church is on 6th Avenue—

Note: Coffee Hour & Fellowship follow the Mass in the Parish Hall.

MONDAY: 7:00p (AA) Doctors' Group (Fireside Room)

TUESDAY: Noon Mass (St. Mary's Chapel)

FRIDAY: AA Meetings

8:00p Ladies' Group (Fireside Room)

8:15p Men's Group (Parish Hall)