

2nd Sun A (2)

What About Prayer?

Introduction...

In today's Gospel we encounter a situation immediately following Jesus' Baptism, which we spoke about last week.

John points out that Jesus is someone very special who has been sent by our loving God to help us.

Jesus shows us God's care and compassion – he is the human face of God... But Jesus also shows us what it means to be human, to be the kind of people that God made us to be. Let's look at this a bit...

I Jesus Reveals Our Humanity

How ought we to live our lives?

Are we meant to be entertained consumers,
busy about so many things,
worried about so many things,
constantly consuming so many things?

Will this make us happy...

A Rolex watch? An expensive dress? A Gucci handbag?

So often today we are consumed by what we consume,
we plunge into debt,

and we end up with ulcers, high blood pressure, or high cholesterol.

Jesus certainly teaches a different way of living.

That's what John says today – heh, look at Jesus...

He certainly is different,

and he wants to show us how God wants us to live,
how we can be happy,

after all, God made us – and if you want to know how something operates best, at peak efficiency, with the least amount of damage – ask its maker.

II Jesus Shows Us the Way.... Prayer

We Christians need to look at Jesus, think about him, pray to him to help us understand how to live and be happy.

Jesus said... I am the way.

Either he was terribly disillusioned, or he meant what he said.

But we are so busy about so many things. My bills, my family, my job, my retirement, my health... my, my, my...

As if the world revolved around us.

The great poet Wordsworth said... "The world is too much with us."

Mother Theresa gives us a way of dealing with this...

She says, "prayer is making room for God in our heart."

We must be a people of prayer if we don't just try to follow Jesus, but to understand Jesus and His message, live as Jesus disciples, and pass our great Catholic tradition onto the next generation.

Do you pray each day?

Do you ever read the Jesus story, listen to his words, ponder his teachings?

Mathew Kelly in his wonderful little book entitled 'Rediscovering Jesus' encourages us to begin reading the Gospels 15 minutes a day – he's done it for years. St. Jerome says that the person ignorant of the Gospels can't really know Jesus.

What will you say to God when you come face to face with God after you die?... And you will come face to face with God.

“I was too busy, too preoccupied, with my, my, my....”

We can only count on God’s mercy at a moment like that.

Are you too busy to pray each day?

To spend time with Jesus each day?

Is it impossible, given your tight schedule, even when retired?

Friends of mine in AA –

and I have worked with folds in AA for over 30 years –

know that frequent daily prayer is a necessity.

As a matter of fact, I have heard many of them speak about their practice of praying frequently each day to their loving God,

who they recognize has delivered them from the death of alcoholism, and is helping them even now to live a useful, sober and serene life. They pray each day because they know it is a matter of life and death...

they know that without God in their daily lives they can’t stay sober, and they might very well die.

Would that we had that same understanding.

Instead, we worry and fret too much,

have envy and jealousies,

carry resentments and grudges in our hearts,

give in much readily to lustful temptations,

are a bit too greedy,

and indulge our addictions, whatever they may be.

Then we wonder why we’re so unhappy... so sad... so unfulfilled...

And even doctors fret that our society is so over-medicated.

As if Cialis will bring us happiness and peace of mind.

Do you pray everyday?

What about morning prayer...

when you get up do you turn to God and say:

"Good morning God" – rather than, "Good God, morning!"

What about a morning offering each day...

go home, get a small piece of paper, write "Morning Offering" on it, tape it to the mirror where you brush your teeth,

and then when you see it tomorrow morning say, "Good morning God.

Thanks for the new day today. Help me this day to do your will. Bless my family..."

On the way to work pray the rosary, or listen to a tape of sacred music – a perfect opportunity for prayer.

Ask God's help and God's love during the day.

Some parishes have simple reading material in the back of the Church to read on your day off. Try to read the Gospels – start with Mathew – 10 or 15 minutes a day.

Try to take some quiet time each day to spend with God.

If people in AA see the necessity of doing this – and I know many of them that do... don't tell me you can't.

Rather, tell me you won't – because it's really not that important to you.

Conclusion

Being Catholic is not just about going to Church on Sunday....

It's about following Jesus, and getting close to Jesus, and having Jesus in your daily life... only prayer can help us do that. Prayer is essential to following Jesus.

From the Desk of Donald Ware, C.P.

As we continue with this Mass let us offer our lives to our loving God as did Jesus, and at Communion when Jesus comes into our very hearts, let's ask Jesus to help us to keep him in our daily lives...

Jesus, help us to make room in our hearts each day for you.