

Sunday 15th Week in OT—TMC

Each of us is emerging from the pandemic in our own unique way
Some of us are slow and cautious about re-engaging in social activities
Some of us are eager to resume our life's activities and commitments
Still others of us want to examine how we might go about things differently
Some who are still part of the world of work might continue to work from home→
And eliminate hours in traffic if they are fortunate enough to have that option

However we choose to emerge, we will find the world has not changed very much
Politics are just as polarized even tho there are such NB things we need to accomplish
And that polarization has seeped even more into the Church—communion wars
Catholic Social Teaching—all of it, not just part of it—continues to be crucial
A consistent ethic of life from womb to tomb—lifting all children/families from poverty
Ending systemic racism—providing health care for all—protecting the earth
We find ourselves called to re-engage with a world & a church still very much broken

Today's scripture readings offer us important guidance as we emerge from our catacombs
The readings ask us? **Who are we, and where are we going?**
The 1st reading and the gospel tell us that we go where God sends us
We're sent to preach message of change of heart to those who ignore troubled/abandoned
But not preach it in the way some opponents do—whether opponents be civil/ecclesial
We must be people of compassion who call others to lives of compassion

Sometimes when we engage with those we strongly disagree with or even oppose,
We run the risk of adopting their tactics and becoming like them
And when we do that, we shed more heat than light on our issues of concern
To avoid that, we have to remember we are Christians 1st. not republicans/democrats 1st
And we have to remember whose we are (beloved children of God)

That's where the reading to Ephesians comes in—let me paraphrase
Before the world began, God chose **us** to be holy—sharers of the divine life
To be holy does not mean silent or passive but it does mean respectful—I **find that hard**
Christ's life, death and resurrection offer proof of God's forgiving, unifying love
Things that do not unify are not of God
Through Christ we have access to the wisdom/insight that enable us to live in God's
grace
We come here to drink more deeply of God's wisdom and insight→
As we continue to promote the common good and the dignity of all people
In doing this we are invited to exist in the joy of God's love
If we are not joyful carrying on God's work, then we are probably not doing God's work
Eph describes our identity from which we ought to operate

What we believe is true about ourselves is equally true about everyone else
Even though we think they are misguided/wrong, they are also God's beloved children
& that should be our foundational outlook when we engage with those we disagree with

May the God of love/truth empower us to stand up for human dignity—ours/others