

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR B; HOMILY HIGHLIGHTS

READINGS; 1st Jer. 23: 1-6, 2nd Eph. 2: 13-18, Gospel Mark 6: 30-34

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want

Introduction; in today's readings, we find the theme about good shepherd to the people of Israel, both of the Old Testament and in the New Testament. Through prophet Jeremiah, God promises to raise a faithful and just shepherd for his people from the root of David. This shepherd will lead his people in justice and peace, with love and understanding and bring about the forgiveness of their sins. Reconciliation and righteousness will be his ways of leading the people of God. All these came into being in the person of Jesus at the dawn of the New Testament.

Reflection; in our day to day struggles with life, we may ask the question; what is the meaning of all that I do? Why and when will all the struggles in life come to an end? Or even the question, why am I living? Such questions arise in our minds especially this time when we are so busy doing a lot or less than we deserve and are not yet satisfied and not fulfilled at all. Machines have simplified life, we do less and less every day and spend the rest of the time on other things which may either connect us with other people or at times separate us from them. Jesus knows and sees the same happening with the twelve apostles and calls them to a quiet place to rest for a short bit.

The meaning of all that we do lies in the connection we built with God and others in the silence of our hearts and minds. We were all created for a purpose; to know the Lord, love him, serve him and finally after our earthly life we may return to him. In order to meet these reasons for our earthly existence, we need faithful and trustworthy shepherd who will lead us to the right ways of life. We also need to shepherd our lives according to the precepts given to us by God; (the commandments). We need above all to allow Christ Jesus to become our shepherd, he said to us all; I am the good shepherd, who lays down his life for his sheep, (Jn 10: 11-18).

In our world today, marked by the theory of 'hurry and worry' we have to take time off and be with God so that he can recharge us with spiritual energy and strength. To receive this strength, we need time for prayer, silence and recollection. We should take notice of what happened to the crowds, though they were tired, restless, without hope and nothing to eat; they searched for Jesus and spent the whole day with him as he taught them many things. We should remember that; all the time even before we think of finding Jesus he in the first place sees us and all our needs and he is always moved with pity.

In the context of finding a place to rest with Jesus for a short while, he reminds us that he is the way, the truth and the life. These three are all what we need to give meaning to our life. Jesus wants us to make him the center of our lives, and the beginning and the end of all things. Let us pray that we may have time for him and with him, as he takes pity on us, he is our true shepherd.