

HOMILY – 12TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME “A”

This weekend our liturgies return to Ordinary Time after a long period of Lenten liturgies, Holy Week liturgies, Easter and after Easter liturgies, Pentecost, Trinity Sunday and Corpus Christi Sunday. But I am sure many of us might be saying to ourselves: **“What is ordinary about the times that we are now living in?”** If anything, these are extraordinary times with Covid-19 ravishing the world and the civil unrest that is calling us to undo what has been so wrong in racial issues in our country over its long history.

I would like to suggest how hearing the Gospel today might challenge us to a new way of living with each other. The Gospel tells us what God considers valuable and important in his creation. Jesus tells us: **“You are worth more than many sparrows.”** At first glance, we might not like hearing our worth compared to sparrows. We might be more comfortable hearing: **“You are worth more than many eagles.”** There is nothing wrong with cute, little brown birds with a lot of energy. But when you compare them to colorful cardinals and speedy hawks, they sort of come across as commonplace, low level creatures.

But that is precisely why Jesus chose the image of the sparrows. He is trying to assert that we should find our value not by comparing ourselves to others but by seeing ourselves through the eyes of God. The Book of Genesis told us that God made all things, and God loves all things. God made some things bigger,

faster, and more beautiful than others – and God loves those things. But God does not simply love the things that are bigger, faster, and more beautiful. God loves all things. God loves sparrows. There is something about their “sparrowness” that gives God constant delight. That might be the reason Jesus uses this example of a sparrow in today’s Gospel. **“Not a sparrow falls from the sky without your heavenly Father noticing it.”**

How different our lives could be, if we could share in God’s way of seeing things instead of comparing our value or another’s value to someone else or something else. The more we can see the world as God sees it, the more that we can see the value in every person and in every moment, the more we can rejoice in the details of our lives, the more our whole life is filled with value.

During this week, take a little time to close yourself off to all the bad news of the world. Turn off the television, close your computer, your iPhone or tablet. You can do it! In the silence, notice and see or hear the simple things around you. Take time to appreciate the hummingbird buzzing around your garden, the beautiful glint in your children’s eyes, the faithfulness and patience of children and parents dealing with these difficult times, the laughter of a close friend and the comfort of a safe home. These are like little sparrows and may help us to see better all the good things around us. Then it will be easier to see how all creation has been wonderfully and lovingly made. God is noticing our goodness every day and loving it. And God

loves it not because it is better or less than someone else's goodness. But because it is our goodness. The goodness that God has created never fails to delight.