

2020 June 28

Thirteenth Sunday of the Ordinary Time

Readings:

First: 2 Kings 4.8-12a, 14-16, "At this season, in due time, you shall embrace a son" (16)

Psalm: 89, "With my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations" (1b)

Second: Romans 6.3-4, 8-11, "If we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him" (8)

The Gospel: Mathew 10.37-42, "And whoever loses their life for my sake will find it" (39b)

Baptism is a call and mission

After the selection and naming of the twelve Apostles, Jesus assigns them duties and responsibilities. He also gives them clear cut instructions how to go about their work, empowers them with sufficient 'capital' with which to work, defines what amount or size of profit they might earn, warns the trading risks, pitfalls, and punishments and rewards they and their 'franchisees' may have. Jesus came to earth with a mission. The Father sent him down with this mission, of establishing a Kingdom for God.

Jesus did his part of that establishment on a strong foundation. He was the cornerstone and into that cornerstone he added the Apostles, and continues building it as a living structure and commanded them and us to continue to build on or add to that foundation. The bonding material with which the living stones have to be added was love. Forgiveness was the water/solution with which to mix this bonding material. The boundaries for this structure were fixed as the ends of the earth and all peoples in it. Baptism is the entrance port to this structure; suffering and finally death are the exit point. This exit point is also the entrance gate to the award ceremony pavilion.

Love is paramount in the kingdom Jesus established, which is his only commandment. Loving God is a must, which is just impossible without loving the fellow humans, who all are brothers and sisters, the children of the one and the same Father. When there is true love among them they love God and are in the mission Jesus entrusted them to execute, and his followers continue to work on in building up of the Kingdom.

The path to this kingdom is that it is a one-way. There is only one plan with no substitute. Jesus is the only Way we have to walk through, the Truth we have to discern and appropriate, and the Life we have to attain and live. That is the meaning of what St. Paul says, "*Of dying to sin and being alive to God in Christ Jesus*" (Romans 6.11). We are the living stones to be built into this structure. The more we care to be built into it, the more the kingdom of Jesus will shine and expand in our time and space. Let us be active in building up the kingdom using all the time, talent and treasure with which God has enriched us. This is our baptismal call and mission.

Fr. George