

Corpus Christi Catholic Community
Homily for 3rd Sunday In OT - Jan. 24, 2021

This morning I was in our apartment living room which faces out to the east. There was the rising sun, just glowing to beat the band. It cheered me up so much! The words of Psalm 95 seemed to fit so well with that. "Today, listen to the voice of the Lord." What voice, what words? Oh, those of today's Gospel where Jesus called the first four disciples: Andrew and Peter, James and John. There's our message for today: "**We** are being called by the Lord ... let's pay attention to the Lord. Ah! We are being called to the spread the Good News of Jesus.

A story. Back in 1962 I was an engineering student at the University of Detroit. We were on a semester system where we were in class for 3 months and then working at a job related to our education for 3 months. My first job was to work in a shop where we made custom electronics. We made electrical assemblies, electronic cables and printed circuit boards. On my first day there, my boss informed me of one of their practices. "*We do not talk about sex, politics or religion here.*" While he said that publicly, most places in society have those same kinds of unspoken rules. Wow! What would Peter and Andrew, James and John have done in such an environment? And more relevantly, what do *we* do here in 2021? Well, here are some ideas.

1. Here's an idea for something you can do right at home with your own family. When you are celebrating a birthday and singing, "Happy Birthday to you" you can follow up with the same melody but with the words, "May the dear Lord bless you."
2. The family is another place to make sure we pray before our meals ... breakfast, lunch and dinner. I had not thought of snack breaks, but, hey, why not then also!

3. Maybe you are older now and the kids do not live with you anymore. Well, how about some phone conversations with them? It can be a chance to remind them that you are keeping them in your prayers with all these medicals issues going around.
4. Oh, you might be older but you are still doing all kinds of things on the computer. Wow! There are so many things that can be done with computers.
 - a. Send the family members a link to our weekend Masses.
 - b. Send the family a link to Fr. Patrick's "Renewal of the Mind"; after all it is only 90 seconds to get that message. Maybe send it when Father's message strikes you good and hard ... or just send it every day!
5. Computers and smart phones open the doors to even more ideas. There are various places you can find and use faith-building items.
 - a. "3-Minute Retreat", a Jesuit website, that presents a Scripture and follows it with a short reflection and a couple personal questions for us to consider.
 - b. "FORMED Daily" which is about 4 minutes each day where one of the Scriptures of the day is broken open and presented.
 - c. "The God Minute", a ten-minute daily prayer/meditation
 - d. Yes, they are good for our use AND we can forward them to family members as well. Oh, and they are on our website!
6. That opens up another whole prospect: people beyond our families! We can share our Holy Information with some good friends or co-workers or neighbors! Computers can a great job for us on this idea. There are places, like Face Book where we can share our ideas. We can also copy and send ideas to others as well.
7. Here's an idea that may be a bit more challenging! Try thinking about this. You are out shopping. You are about to enter a grocery store. You do a nice gesture to the person behind you. You hold the door open for them and tell them "Have a blessed day!" as they enter, and then follow them in the door. Hey, what have you got to

lose with that? Maybe you get a smile; maybe a frown; maybe no reaction at all.

8. Here's an idea for use right here in our Corpus Christi parish. We all seem to sit in "our usual places" here at Mass. Since so many of us are currently viewing Mass on our phones or computers, we do not get to sit beside our usual pew-mates. How about reaching out to one or more of them by the telephone. We can tell them that we miss them; we can ask them how they are doing, how they are coping with the pandemic. We can also offer to pray for them, whether or not they are in good health. ... We could also consider going to visit them!
9. How would you like to have some fun with a stranger?!?! One of our fellow members likes to do the following. While you are waiting in line at the grocery store you can ask the person behind you the following. "Did you get my message?" The person behind you will probably be a little dismayed. They might answer: "No. What was the message?" We can then say in reply: "God loves you." Or "Jesus loves you." What do you think they will say in reply? That's right! It could be almost anything!
10. Yes, it does not have to be just you doing it all alone. There are ways to share in these efforts. We have parish members who go out in teams of two or three and visit homes here in the neighborhood. The ministry is simply called "Visiting Our Neighbors." We typically do it in the summer during the early evening hours.
11. We have a similar effort called "Storefront Evangelization". We simply stand outside the store entrances and ask people if they would like us to pray for them. Some say "no". Some ignore us. Some say: "See you on my way out." When people do stop for prayer we ask them what needs prayer ... and, of course, we pray for whatever that is! That often leads to more conversation and questions about where our church is located.

12. How about writing your message instead of speaking it? You can share your faith experiences, your endorsements of faith-related programs or websites, etc. We can post items on our parish website.
13. How about putting your faith into action with a "Random Act of Kindness" where you can share your efforts on a project, your financial resources, or material possessions with someone in need?
14. How about putting a bumper sticker on your car? We don't have any bumper stickers at this point, but it has been suggested!

I would like to echo a song that we sang here at church last weekend.

"Here I am, Lord.

Is it I, Lord?

I have heard you calling in the night.

I will go, Lord, if you lead me.

I will hold your people in my heart."

We sang that last week because it related to our first reading where the young Samuel heard the Lord speak to him at night. The prophet Isaiah had a similar experience of the Lord calling him. Today **our** challenge is similar. God is calling us, EACH of us, to speak up for the Lord here and now in this 21st century. It falls right in line with our first reading where Jonah is sent by God to alert the people of Nineveh. Our psalm today is also encouraging, "Teach me your ways, O Lord."

Please ask the Lord what he has in mind for YOUR efforts!!!!

Not sure at this point? How about the encouraging words we heard from Amanda Gorman, that 23 year-old woman poet, at the Inauguration?

There is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it.

If only we're brave enough to be it.

Handout:

Corpus Christi Catholic Community - Building the Body of Christ

14 Ideas for Spreading the Word of the Lord

1. Birthday song: "May the dear Lord bless you"
2. Daily family meal and evening prayers
3. Phoning relatives & keeping them in your prayers
4. Using the computer to recommend CC events to family
5. Using the computer to recommend other websites to family
6. Using computer technologies beyond our families
7. While shopping, open door for another and say "Have a blest day".
8. Call church pew-mates we have not seen in awhile
9. Waiting in line: "Did you get my message?" "God/Jesus loves you."
10. Group efforts like "Visiting Our Neighbors"
11. Group efforts like "Storefront Evangelization"
12. Write a faith-encouraging message for our website
13. Do a "Random Act of Kindness"
14. Put a bumper sticker on your car