

6<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, 13 February 2022

Scriptures: Jeremiah 17:5-8; 1Cor. 15:12,16-20; Luke 6:17,20-26

Homily: Fr. Ken

In the first reading from the prophet Jeremiah, we find two types of people: those who put their trust solely in humans; and secondly, those who put their trust in God.

In the second reading from Paul's first letter to the Christians in Corinth, Paul says to us as well that if Christ has not been raised from the dead, our sins are still with us.

Both Jeremiah in the Hebrew Scriptures and St. Paul in the New Testament, remind us that those who think that humans have all the answers to life's questions, will find in the end, that what they believe is empty. On the other hand, those who trust in God, and build their lives on God's word, will find that what looks like a dry and empty world will, in fact, be transformed.

The same type of contrast is made by Jesus himself in the Gospel passage. St. Luke tells us that those people whose lives are replete with every good material thing are setting themselves up for disappointment. The time will come for them to lose it all. But those who have nothing are the heirs to the Kingdom of God; the hungry shall be satisfied; the sad and disheartened will be filled with joy and happiness; those persecuted and unwanted by society today, will enjoy the fullness of life in heaven.

In such a world of stark contrasts it would be easy to label all the wealth of the developed world as something bad or evil; and the poverty and deprivation of the developing world as opportunities for "good".

However, in the darkness of our modern world, we need a light to help us distinguish just what is true, what is the way God wants us to live. For that, Jesus says: "I am the light of the world;

anyone who follows me will not be walking in the dark but will have the light of life”.

The truth is that all of us are invited to be part of the mission of Jesus to bring light into the world. We are called to be continually enlightened by Christ so that our light can shine brightly. Jesus teaches us how to live by loving God with everything we have and by loving our neighbor as ourselves. The light of Jesus helps us to discern what we are to do in any situation; how to put our neighbor's needs before our own; how to forgive one another just as God has forgiven us. Jesus calls us to a new scale of values whereby we define success not by the security of our bank balance. The true success of our lives will lie in our becoming the person that God created us to be, and that person is an image of Jesus.

At first sight, the world may seem dead like a desert. There are no signs of life. But when the rain does fall, when wells are dug, when gardens are planted and irrigated, suddenly the desert springs to life. This has got to be our hope; that the world is not beyond redemption. Jesus calls us to be people of faith, people with a vision, people who are prepared to be a light in the darkness such that the light of Jesus can give a new vision of what humanity is really meant to be.

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