

Thirty-Third Sunday November Ordinary time "C" ~ November 13, 2022 - Annual Catholic Appeal 5

Malachi 3:19-20a; Psalm 98:5-6, 7-8, 9; 2 Thessalonians 3:7-12; Luke 21:5-19

Homily ~ Father Ed Hislop

We could wonder, as we gather again to be nurtured with good news, and nourished together at this Table, how in a world of so much bad news and among so many caught in famines, plagues, insurrections, lies, and hatred: what difference, we could wonder, does this gathering make, or what difference does the gathering of the whole church make in such a world. *How "after the example of Christ and at his command," do we stand as "living witnesses," and work for mercy and compassion, "that all people may be raised up by the hope of a world made new?"*

We might wonder, but we also remember. We remember, so we "work" to hear, see, and care: we work, and so we can eat and soon drink again at this table. Here we finally remember what we can so easily forget in the midst of turmoil: God is with us, Christ is present, the Spirit still inspires, and we have been made worthy of the "work." So, we carry on despite the accomplishments and victories; the failures and disappointments of ourselves and others.

Here we dare to remember, as Pope Francis reminds us, that no one earns a place at this Supper, but are rather drawn here by the burning desire of Jesus himself to eat and drink with the many. Desiderio Desideravi #4

The desire to feed us for the "work" of belonging and believing: the "work" of engaging in service "for the many;" the "work" of seeing, hearing, and persevering; the "work" of speaking together, with a "burning desire," a word of hope and mercy that will rouse, inspire, intrigue, and welcome the many. This is the "work," in the middle of everything, to which we are invited if we want to eat and drink. For that labor we are nourished at a

single table, with room enough for all, eating from one loaf of real bread, fruit of the earth, and drinking from one cup of real wine, fruit of the vine, all the work of human hands. One loaf broken and given for all; one cup shared by the many for joyful mercy. Here we are nourished for the "work" we must do in his memory: To take, bless, break, share, pour and give, what we have, sometimes in "toil and drudgery," with a "burning desire" to serve and welcome all. Then we can eat and drink because we have "worked."

Then we can "look into the signs of the times by the light of faith;" and in the labor of seeing, devote ourselves to the "service of the Gospel" even in the midst of "evil doing," ominous events, unexpected turns, "wars, insurrections," "powerful earthquakes, fires, tornadoes, floods, famine, and plagues." Because we are here, we can remember "not to be deceived when many come saying, 'I am the one,' "the time has come." We have Christ, or rather Christ has us. It is the news he brings and the way he leads that inspires us, opens our eyes and hearts to truth in ways that re-create and renew each of us and all of us and the whole church, again and again, so "that all people may be raised up by the hope of world made new," a newness from which there is no going back; no going back, from the vision and work of Christ "who always shows compassion for children and for the poor, for the sick and for sinners, who himself became neighbor to the oppressed and the afflicted."

Here we encounter Christ who invites us to follow him as his Church, his disciples, as he walks with the whole human family on the journey of life. Like Christ we are not to speak or act in a "disorderly way" but in "toil and drudgery, night and day," we

are to announce and live the way of Christ's merciful compassion and generous hospitality. Setting aside the urge to judge, we are nourished to live and speak the vision of the Gospel with courage and respect. We are fed for this kind of "work," this way of living with a "burning desire" to serve and welcome. This we are to remember!

Such a way and faith, such remembering, is sometimes filled with risks; a vision which has brought and does bring persecution to some, and to others ridicule, rejection, and consternation, sadly, too often, from the Church itself.

Still we must feel the need to walk, go, and work with "*the many*" who labor and are burdened; to listen to the lost, forgotten, shunned, and judged, and those who feel the church has left them unheard and uncared for. We and the whole church must begin "*to enlarge the space of our tent,*" a great "work" first envisioned by the Prophet Isaiah. Is 54:2 "Work" to be done by our own "burning desire," like Jesus', to eat and drink in this place with them!

We are given food and drink for that work, nourishment to become who we are—the voice of God, the compassion of Christ and the vision of the Spirit, encouraged by those in whose footsteps we walk, whose living, both among and for us, we remember. True to the One in whose memory we live and act we, choose—*choose*—to be servants of the Gospel. We need to want to do the work of "*looking into the signs of the times by the light of faith,*" even if ridiculed, scorned, or ignored.

We can endure prophets of doom who are sure the end is near; who preach a message of discouragement, fear, and exclusion. We can endure because we have been to this Table; we eat and drink here because we "work!"

So we must believe and feel that "*there will arise the sun of justice with its healing rays,*" remembering that only justice can bring healing.

We choose to trust in Good news: BY YOUR PERSEVERANCE YOU WILL SECURE YOUR LIVES."  
JESUS IS ALIVE!

