

Whoever Receives You Receives Me

Thirteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time – July 2, 2017 – Matthew 10:37-42

Jesus teaches the apostles this week what discipleship looks like. It isn't a completely rosy picture. In fact, Jesus promises conflicts while expecting complete loyalty from the disciples (and us), a loyalty stronger than family bonds.

I find this teaching difficult as my husband, children, daughter-in-law, son-in-law and grandchildren are the most precious relationships in my life. Jesus demands that we love him more than these intimate bonds. Wow... on the initial reading of this gospel, I find myself challenged.

After reading a few commentaries and reflecting on this gospel in prayer, I came away with a different perspective. **“Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me.”**

The source of all blessings is God. Every gift I have, including my family, is not here because of me. These important relationships are here because God has gifted me with them. The God who created me and called me into relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit asks that my first and foremost acknowledgement and love are to that Divine Truth. I can love my husband and all my family because God loved me first.

Jesus is sending his disciples out into the world to do his work this week. He is promising that the relationship with him may mean a division between one's father or mother, son or daughter because not everyone will receive Jesus in the way we are called to as baptized members of his flock.

In the overall story this week Jesus indicates that not everyone will receive him. Some of our own family may dismiss our joyful faith as having no bearing in their lives. This may lead to heartache and division.

The other side of this is that those who do welcome a disciple of Christ actually is welcoming Jesus himself. In turn, those who welcome Jesus welcome the Father who sent him. The reward is the acknowledgement of God's great love for us and the Son's great sacrifice that is sustained within each of his followers through the gift of the Holy Spirit. Therefore as Jesus proclaims this week, **“Whoever receives you receives me.”** I have some work to do to bring this message of Christ and his love to the rest of the world.

Blessings!


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