

What Did He Teach Them?

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Mark 6:30-34

July 22, 2018

This particular section of chapter six, from the gospel of Mark, follows last week's story of the disciples being sent on mission. Today they return. We can imagine them hungry, tired, and exhausted from the work they have done. Jesus' first instruction to them is to **"Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while."** Jesus is teaching them, with an invitation into communion, that every disciple must spend time in rest and restoration (Sabbath) with Jesus to be effective in their ministry.

This idea of Sabbath rest comes from the Jewish understanding that all work done was done in the name of the Lord. As God commanded the Israelites to rest on the seventh day from all their work. So too, God calls all of us Christians into the same mindset every Sunday.

We are to stop what we are doing to spend time with Jesus. For us as Catholic Christians this means we are to spend time with Jesus celebrating and participating in the Eucharistic celebration of the Mass. The reason for this is simple. The work that we do all week is not OUR work....It is GOD's work. We are called to give all that we are and all that we have to the Mission of Christ. It is only in this mindset that we ourselves can be fulfilled.

This reality is recognized in the vast numbers of people who hunger for Jesus' saving care this week. The work load is enormous. **"People were coming and going in great numbers, and they had no opportunity even to eat."** How true is this today? People run from one thing to the next searching for the next best thing that will fill the empty void in their heart. People work 80 hours a week to buy the next biggest item on their "must have" list. The truth is that what is needed by all of humanity is a Savior. They are looking for a shepherd. They are searching for someone who cares about them, someone with unconditional love for them.

In the first reading from the prophet Jeremiah, we hear that God will **"raise up a righteous shoot to David; as a king he shall reign and govern wisely, he shall do what is just and right in the land."** Jesus has come to care for the sheep. Jesus has called his disciples to help. **"I will appoint shepherds for them who will shepherd them so that they no longer need to fear and tremble; and none shall be missing, says the Lord."** Jesus has come as the one true shepherd. Jesus has appointed the disciples to be his shepherds to care for his flock.

Jesus has also appointed us, through baptism, to be shepherds of the lives we lead. If we have been called as parents then we are to shepherd and care for our children. If we have been called to work in a factory or on the farm then we too are shepherds of the work that we do, caring for those we work beside. The career that we have is our ministry. We are to make holy the life that we live by sharing in the work of God's care for the least, especially those who are spiritually poor and without knowledge of God's saving love.

When Jesus saw the vast crowd in today's gospel, **"his heart was moved with pity for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd, and he began to teach them many things."** What did he teach them? He taught them that he cares and loves them. We, in turn, are called to share that Good News with those we meet. So the question for us this week.... Have we learned what Jesus taught them?

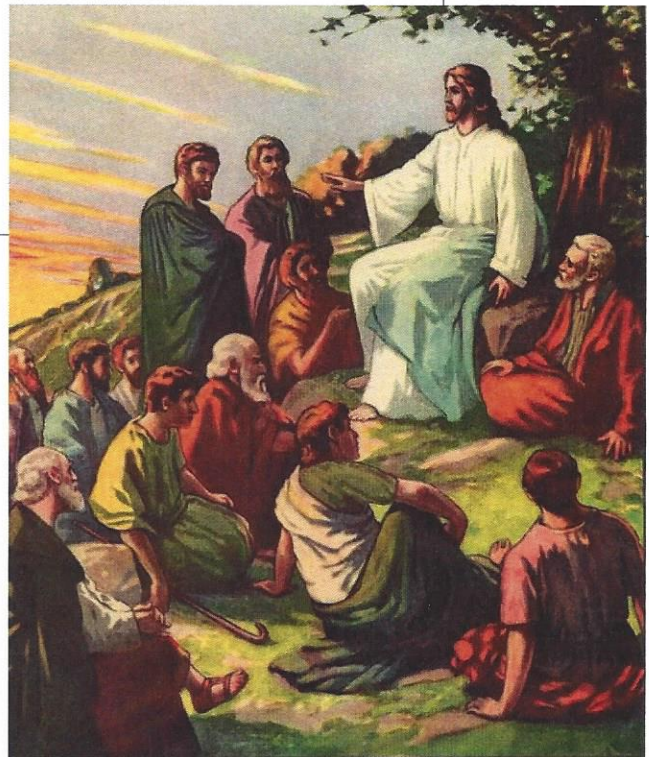
Blessings!


Sue Schettler

July 22, 2018

...And he began to teach
them many things.

Sixteenth Week of Ordinary Time



Readings for the Week of July 22, 2018

Sunday: Jer 23:1-6/Ps 23:1-3, 3-4, 5, 6 [1]/Eph 2:13-18/Mk 6:30-34

Monday: Mi 6:1-4, 6-8/Ps 50:5-6, 8-9, 16bc-17, 21 and 23 [23b]/Mt 12:38-42

Tuesday: Mi 7:14-15, 18-20/Ps 85:2-4, 5-6, 7-8 [8a]/Mt 12:46-50

Wednesday: 2 Cor 4:7-15/Ps 126:1bc-2ab, 2cd-3, 4-5, 6 [5]/Mt 20:20-28

Thursday: Jer 2:1-3, 7-8, 12-13/Ps 36:6-7ab, 8-9, 10-11 [10a]/Mt 13:10-17

Friday: Jer 3:14-17/Jer 31:10, 11-12abcd, 13 [cf. 10d]/Mt 13:18-23

Saturday: Jer 7:1-11/Ps 84:3, 4, 5-6a and 8a, 11 [2]/Mt 13:24-30

Next Sunday: 2 Kgs 4:42-44/Ps 145:10-11, 15-16, 17-18 [cf. 16]/Eph 4:1-6/Jn 6:1-15