

From the Pastor's Office

14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

I am always amused when I read the scriptures and I come upon what I might call “unsavory” language. Today in Isaiah he speaks of Jerusalem as a woman. “O that you may suck fully of the milk of her comfort, delight at her abundant breasts.” Straight away some narrow-minded person is calling the Diocese because I used words that nice people don’t say. Let us be careful that we don’t sanitize the whole world. I think if I truly was a follower of Christ I should do my ministry down Sixth Street in the middle of the night with all the street people. If the parishioners found out that I was doing that there would be consternation. We are respectable people and we want our priests to be respectable also. Let us never sanitize the Christian message. Today in the Gospel Jesus sends out His disciples for their first run as ministers of His. Jesus warns them. He prepared them. We must not be too swayed by the idealism of youth. I am going to go forth and I am going to preach the message of Jesus and it is all going to be great. Let me tell you about the time I was spat at for being a Catholic priest. Nothing lovely about that. I do remember however, when I lived in Europe, I had to walk along the street during the time when the whole priests pedophile thing was happening. At that time I was actually working in London. I was home for Christmas and I was out visiting my cousins, dressed as a priest. I remember standing at the bus stop. People were looking at me. A gang of college students were coming down the street and I remember thinking, they are going to say something to me. I felt a little bit vulnerable. A man approached me. I thought, here it comes. The man said that he so admired the fact that I was on the street dressed as a priest, acknowledging the public debate right then. He told me that he realized that priests can be given a hard time. He invited me to keep going. I was a bit delighted by that. We hear God calling us to ministry and service. Let’s be realistic. It is not all champagne and parties. Lots of times it is hard graft. We all try to make a difference. We want things to be better. There, but for the grace of God go it. That is all it takes.



With love,
Fr. Pat