

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

Today we are facing a great crisis in our community, in our state, in our country in our world. The readings of today are a wakeup call! Like it was said last week that we are in a war with Satan and our souls are in danger of being lost.

- Too many of our cultural, political, and economic **leaders** are trying to build a stable, just, and prosperous global society **without acknowledging our dependence on God**.
- This is what is called **secularism**. This is a reality that makes man god who determines right from wrong, good from evil, etc.
- The injustices of **Soviet Communism**, the destruction of two **World Wars**, the genocides such as the large scale killings in abortion clinics, and massacres flaring up on every continent...
- These resulted from human societies trying to **build themselves up** without building on the **solid foundation** of faith in and obedience to **Christ** and his teachings, the God of wisdom, mercy, and peace. This sets things up for dictatorships and tyranny.
- St Paul in the second reading becomes a shining **example in this battle against the darkness evil**. He courageously dedicated his entire life to **spreading the gospel to all peoples**, in spite of suffering, persecution, and rejection. Paul did not bury his head in the sand or ignore the truth. He accepted it. He lived it. He saw it was his duty to proclaim it.
- If **every Catholic** decided to **follow that example** in their own lives, then the Church would once again fulfill its **critical mission** of being the **salt of the earth** and the **light of the world**.

- That is what we are **for**; it is our primary **mission** in life, every single one of us.

¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Our **motto** must be **the same** as the one St Paul wrote in today's Second Reading: "Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!" The preaching of the gospel doesn't mean standing at a pulpit or on a street corner. It means being a living sermon!!

There are **two sides** to this living sermon: **prayer and action**.

We all need to stay close to Christ through a **healthy prayer life** and through the **sacraments**.

But prayer is only **half** of our missionary responsibility.

The **other** half is **action**.

We need to **actively spread the gospel** to those around us.

We do this in **three ways**.

First, by our **example**.

- This doesn't **add** anything to our normal to-do list, rather it affects **how** we accomplish everything we do.
- When we **treat others** with respect, kindness, and patience,
- When we fulfill our **life-responsibilities** attentively and lovingly,
- When our **manner of life** reflects the humility, elegance, simplicity, and joy of Jesus and Mary,

- Then we become **living advertisements** of how the gospel can give **meaning and beauty** to life.

Second, by our **words**.

- There are times when **someone** in our lives, maybe a family member or team member, a friend, a colleague, or even a stranger, needs to **hear about Jesus Christ** and his message of salvation.
- We should **always be ready** to meet that need,
- not **pounding people over the head** with the Bible,
- but sharing with them the **knowledge that God has given us**, knowing that it will help them **more** than anything else.

Third, by **our deeds**.

- This means developing and using our **God-given talents** to **benefit our neighbors**,
- choosing careers and jobs that are **positive**,
- dedicating time to **teach and serve** those in need,
- and even, if God calls us, putting **all our eggs in Christ's basket** through a vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life.

As Jesus renews his **unconditional commitment** to us in this Mass, let's ask him to give us courage in living out **our** commitment to **him**, turning our example, words, and deeds into **clear messages** of his **truth and love**.