

**Twenty-Third Sunday Year A. Work as much as possible to save a life. 10<sup>th</sup> September 2023.**

We thank God for the gift of human intellect, which was bestowed to humanity by God to share in the beautiful work of created things. Unfortunately, humankind manipulates this intellect to the detriment of the human soul. It is no wonder today, in our world, what is good, and evil is seen based on individual knowledge; Relativism is what modern man holds on to. What is intrinsically wrong and right depends on the individual or culture. Under normal circumstances, reason can help us to know that what is right and wrong and are naturally and universally accepted. Because we manipulate the truth, so, we hardly agree with what is intrinsically right and continue with our wickedness in the world. Prophet Ezekiel was instructed in our first reading to speak out the truth to the wicked to return from their wicked ways, but if he refused to tell them, he would be held responsible for their death. Better to speak the truth and be hated than to be silent and be loved.

A utilitarian philosopher John Stuart Mill said this and was later coined by Edmund Burke “*All that is needed for evil to prosper is for good people to remain silent*”. By the virtue of our baptism, we are called to be priests, kings, and prophets; we too have the responsibility to guide and lead people to the truth. When we are silent and avoid speaking the truth, we are paving the way for evil to reign. So many people are responsible for the evil we encounter today because they failed to speak out. So many children went astray because the parents failed in their responsibility, so many students came out with good credit in school but lack discipline because the teacher failed in their responsibility, so many people perish and are still perishing because the pastors of the soul fail in their responsibility simply because they are afraid not to offend the listeners or they may lose support from their members. Saint Paul in our second reading said the only way to fulfill the law is by loving one another. Where is love when we refused to show our children the right path to follow instead, we allow them to burn their hands on fire? Where is love if we are supporting what is evil to destroy the world the inhabitants of our brothers, sisters, friends, children, and well-wishers?

Dear beloved in Christ, if we are bold to stand on what is right, we would be able to accomplish what Evangelist Matthew urges us to do in the gospel: we will humble ourselves to seek reconciliation with those who hurt us, knowing that we too have once hurt others. Jesus teaches us about the steps toward reconciliation.

**Keep the matter private-** approach the person who sinned and speak with him alone. It is possible he doesn't even realize what he has done.

**Ask for help from others-** if the offender refuses, one is free to involve others to try once again to win him.

**Ask the church for help-** our goal is not the case of winning of a brother. The word “gained” refer to winning the lost; but it is also, important to win and saved the soul of that person.

If the persons agree then, you have won him but if he does not, treat him like a gentile, that is ignore him. The whole essence of the reconciliation is not to win an argument but to save the soul from losing.

God reconciled the world to himself and entrusted us with the message of reconciliation. At the end of the Mass, the Priest or Deacon says the following options: Go forth, the Mass is ended. Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord. Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life, and Go in Peace. With no exemption, all are required to save souls and to reconcile with one another, after going out of the Church.

Peace,

Fr. Jingbe Simon