

Fr Ryan Homily – 8/6/2023

Read: Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14; Psalm 97; 2 Peter 1:16-19; Matthew 17:1-9

So I wanna share a story about this man named Andrew that he shared with me. Andrew is a young man, he's in love with the Lord, plays guitar in a worship band, and he was on his way home one time from a conference that he was at. He was on an airplane sitting next to this rather successful, rather intimidating woman and she's very extraverted so she just starts up a conversation with him. Like what took you away from home? What were you doing? And Andrew could've just said I was at a conference and let it be. But Andrew said I was at this conference for leaders of Catholic worship and that opened the door for this lady to say that she was an atheist, that she would never believe in Jesus, and it was a two and a half hour back and forth about you name it – Jesus, the Catholic church, faith, heaven and hell, all of it. Two and a half hours, the entire plane ride, having this debate. And Andrew realizes at one point we're not getting very far, right. Every time I give a reason there's a reason for her to get out of the reason. But in the course of their conversation this woman revealed that ever since she could remember she had an awful pain in her foot. Like every time she stood up, walking was excruciating. She walked with a limp most of her life. And so at one point Andrew says this, he says okay we're not getting very far, it's a good conversation that we're having, but Andrew said he just went for it, he said ma'am if Jesus healed your foot would you believe in Him? She's like well ya of course I would. Okay well would you be willing to meet me at baggage claim after we land. I'm gonna pray for your foot to be healed. If Jesus heals your foot will you believe in Him? Sure, alright. So the plane lands, he's waiting for awhile at baggage claim, eventually she walks over, and she says okay what do we do now? And Andrew says alright let's sit over here. Is it okay if I put my hand on your shoulder? I'm gonna pray with you for a little bit. And so he starts praying in Jesus' name for her foot to be healed. A little time goes by, and she says what are you doing right now? And he says why what are you experiencing? The pain in my foot is going away, what are you doing? He says well let's just keep praying, let's give it some more time. She gets up, walks around a little bit, keeps praying. Eventually she can like jump up and down on her foot. The pain is gone. So Andrew says okay, Jesus healed your foot, are you willing to give your life to Him? She's like yeah, this is awesome! So right there in baggage claim her foot is healed, Andrew leads her in a prayer renouncing

all her sins, claiming Jesus as Lord of her life. It was truly a grace filled moment for her all because Andrew was willing to let Jesus be his Lord and then all of a sudden he becomes the Lord of somebody else. But here's the thing, Andrew has to say well I'll be praying for you but then they part ways. Where does that woman go from there? Like what does she do now? What do you tell her? Show up for mass next Sunday it'll be great. What if this woman at this stage came to you? Imagine someone just had their life completely changed. They go from being an atheist to being a Christian in thirty minutes because of this healing and she comes to your parish, your door, and says Jesus changed my life what do I do? What do you say to her? Well I know it's March, RCIA starts in the fall, come back then. Jesus has changed my life, what do I do? Well talk to father. I know there's like a line and he has to run to get to the next mass – well you can't talk to him. I don't know what you should do. Or Jesus just changed my life, well here's a really good video series that you should watch. Like what should this woman do? When she talked to people and realized oh you show up for mass on Sunday but He's not really Lord of your life. And here's what I'm getting at like programs are awesome but it's only disciples that make disciples. Only people who are following Christ can help other people follow Christ. If someone just met Christ and then they met you could you say if you wanna follow Him live like this? Live like I do, follow my example and you can listen to what I say because I listen to Him. And really this is what our gospel is all about today. It's this incredible moment on Mount Tabor – Jesus is transfigured and notice three of His disciples get to be there. Jesus wants Peter, James, and John to see this and Peter's reaction, it's just so Peter. He's always doing this stuff because he just starts yapping. Moses and Elijah are there with Jesus, I imagine it's a great conversation, and Peter's like let's make something. Let's make tents. That'll be good and then we can stay here. And so the Heavenly Father has to cut him off and say shut up Peter. Peter, this is my beloved Son – stop talking. Listen to Him. Listen to Him. And so often, that's us. We're like Peter, we just wanna do stuff. We wanna say things. It could be good stuff but first we need to listen to Jesus if we're gonna be disciples. A few Sundays ago in the gospel, Jesus said My yoke is easy, My burden light – learn from Me. And so here the Heavenly Father is telling us listen to Him. Listen to Jesus. Jesus tells us to learn from Him. And that is an essential part of being a disciple. Listening to Him, learning from Him. Question, how many of us watched the news this past week or read the news online something like that? How many of us read

a book, a novel from maybe a favorite author? How many of you had to read a journal or study something, a manual, for the work that you do something like that. We have all these teachers in different ways in our lives that we listen to, that we're learning from. I wonder how many of us read the Bible every day during this past week? How many of us read from the Catechism? Or some spiritual reading from a saint? A devotional? Where we actually let Jesus be our teacher. One of the marks of the disciple is listen to Him as our Heavenly Father tells us to. If I'm not taking time to listen to Jesus to learn from Him, I'm not a disciple of His I'm a disciple of whoever I'm listening to. A disciple is someone who lets Jesus be Lord of their learning. And so think about this, obviously your relationship with Jesus is important, it means something to you, or you wouldn't be here. Some of you are here on vacation, you had to look up a mass time, go out of your way to be here today, awesome! Like well done. And that means that probably most of us here, think about this, you know more about Jesus than the apostles knew about Jesus. You know more about Jesus than the apostles did. Think about that. Peter, James, and John in this gospel, you know more about Jesus than they did. You know He is fully God and fully man, you know He's the second person of the Trinity, all these other things about Jesus. You know more about Him than the people who changed the world in His name. You know Him better than the guys who wrote the Bible! You know a lot about Him. You know more than they did but here's the problem sometimes we just know "about" Him we don't actually "know" Him. See they knew Him better than a lot of us know Him. He can't just be Lord of my learning He has to be Lord of my heart. He has to be Lord of my love. I can't just learn about Jesus; I need to have a relationship with Him which means I need to pray. I can't be a disciple unless I pray. Yes Jesus needs to be Lord of my learning, He also has to be Lord of my love and that takes time. It takes time. More than just bless us oh Lord and these thy gifts, more than now I lay me down to sleep, it takes time. I heard someone say it like this prayer is not where you work on your relationship with Jesus, He said prayer is your relationship with Jesus. Prayer is not what helps you in your relationship with Him, prayer IS your relationship with Jesus. And so if I don't actually spend time in prayer with Jesus, newsflash, I don't have a relationship with Jesus. Jesus needs to be Lord of our learning and Lord of our love which means I need to pray. And I'm all about simple. Too often we make these things so complicated. Let's simplify things so how do I need to pray. Well one I'd say give it fifteen minutes a day.

What do I do when I have to pray? Well you talk to Him. Actually I think we should combine both learning and the love. And what I mean by that is say take the scriptures or take the Catechism, some spiritual writing, the writing of a saint and let Him speak to you through that. And He tells you who He is. And then after He talks to you, He reveals Himself to you, His heart to you, then you reveal your heart to Him. Right it's really simple. You don't have to be like I don't know how to pray. It's not a technique you learn. After He reveals His heart to you, you learn something about Him, you reveal your heart to Him. Now the problem is that sometimes we say yeah but He knows everything. Like He's God He already knows everything about me. Okay, pretend He didn't know everything. I remember someone asking me this question like if all Jesus knew about your life was what you told Him in your prayer, how much would He know about you? Right if all Jesus knew about your life was what you told Him in prayer, how well would He know you. A lot of times though we skip over that part. I skip over Lord here's how my day went. Lord here's what I'm afraid of. Lord here's what's in my heart. He reveals His heart to you through reading and then a lot of times were like cool I'm gonna go think about that for a while. But in a normal conversation what would happen? Say your spouse comes home at the end of the day and says here's how my day went. And you're like wow fascinating; I'm gonna go think about that for a while. Like I guess you could do that, or you might say thank you for sharing let me tell you how my day was. It's called a relationship. Jesus wants a relationship like that with you. So we don't have to make it complicated. Just let Him reveal Himself to you for seven and a half minutes, and then the next seven and a half minutes you tell Him how your day was. It's so simple. Sometimes yeah we get stuck in our prayer that's why last week or the week before I said we should have a mentor in our life, someone we can go to and help us work through certain things. That's important too. But imagine how your life would change if Jesus was Lord of your love. If He actually got some time in your day for prayer. Cause the disciple is someone who has Jesus as Lord of their learning, Lord of their love, and the Lord of their life. So this is the last thing, for many of us today letting Him, Jesus, be Lord of our life actually just means going to confession cause it's been way too long. And in doing that I'm saying okay Jesus You get to be Lord of my life. And in not doing that I'm saying Jesus You don't get to be Lord of my life. Because how many of us walk around carrying things we don't want to. It could be a relationship that shouldn't be there and we know shouldn't be there. It could be

an activity that you're scrambling after that you don't need to be. It could be your work. It could be a sin you're holding on to because you're afraid to let it go. But if we actually got to know Jesus more by spending time in prayer, that He's actually here to bring life not take life, that if He becomes Lord of your learning and love, I guarantee you it will be easier to make Him Lord of your life. But ya gotta be willing to put in the time to get to know Him not just things about Him. The temptation always is to start doing what Peter did today in the gospel. We just start talking, we start going, we start doing because we're uncomfortable when we have to listen. And it takes courage, it really takes courage to let the Heavenly Father speak to your heart when He says stop it, stop. This is My Beloved Son, listen to Him, learn from Him. And so Jesus wants a relationship with you. He's not trying to trick you by getting you to be close to Him. Only disciples make disciples and an essential part of being a disciple is letting Jesus be Lord of my learning and Lord of my love, so I give Him my time and that happens through prayer. And only by doing that will I trust Jesus enough to make Him Lord of my life. If you haven't been doing that, begin that process this week. Ask Him to take away your fear of Him or whatever else is in there and He will do that for you because He loves you. Get to know Him, not just things about Him and let Him get to know you.

Amen