



Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time February 23, 2014

Introductory Rites

Greeting

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: *Amen.*

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And with your spirit.*

Introduction and Welcome

P: Dear Friends: Today, we gratefully celebrate God's call to us to be holy. Biblical holiness means the integration and inseparability of loving God and serving our neighbor. It means the founding of a community around Jesus who loves us unconditionally. It means being in community that subverts our tendency for revenge and violence in favor of compassion and companionship for liberation.

Penitential Act

P: Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us turn to God now

Sunday Liturgy Guide for the Church of the Poor in the Spirit of the New Evangelization

The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, are made holy through the subversive acts of love without limits.

Furthermore, in its continuing reflection on the link between the Church of the Poor and the Basic Ecclesial Communities, the PCP-II describes the BEC, thus: **(140)** In many dioceses today Basic Ecclesial Communities are a pastoral priority. Though there are many other forms of small faith communities today, Basic Ecclesial Communities are visibly a significant expression of ecclesial renewal. The rapidity of their growth in various parts of the Philippines augurs well for the widespread activation of God-given charisms among the poor. Their potential for evangelization is

a great hope for the Church in the Philippines.

In his presentation of the National BEC Profile last September 17, 2013, Fr. Amado Picardal, CSsR described the growth BECs in Luzon as spirited, picking up in the Visayas and as somewhat stagnating in Mindanao. He went on to describe their levels of growth as varied and uneven, without necessarily judging the quality and value of the growth attained by a particular BEC. Each has its own pace.

It would be interesting to have a reflection on the particular level of growth of your BEC in light of the Church of the Poor and the call to renewal. In what sense can you be renewed still so as to grow more as BEC and fulfill the way of being Church, the Church of the Poor? ■

for his saving help and forgiveness, because our God is a God of love and compassion.

A: Amen.

P: May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

C: Amen.

P: You were sent to heal the contrite of heart, Lord, have mercy.

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: You came to call sinners, Christ, have mercy.

C: Christ, have mercy.

P: You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us, Lord, have mercy.

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

Glory to God in the highest...

Collect

P: Grant, we pray, almighty God, that, always pondering the spiritual things, we may carry out in both word and deed that which is pleasing to you. Through our Lord Jesus Christ Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

C: Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: Lev 19,1-2. 17-18

L: A reading from the book of Leviticus.

The LORD said to Moses, “Speak to the whole Israelite community and tell them: Be holy, for I, the LORD, your God, am holy. “You shall not bear hatred for your brother or sister in your heart. Though you may have to reprove your fellow citizen, do not incur sin

because of him. Take no revenge and cherish no grudge against any of your people. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.”

The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Commentary on Lev 19,1-2. 17-18:

This is a central passage in the Code of Holiness: the exhortation to be holy for “I the Lord your God am holy” is followed by prescriptions of meeting the demands of cult and religion that are inseparably integrated with meeting the social and moral demands. Thus, one cannot worship God if one cannot love and serve one’s neighbor, one’s fellow citizen, the stranger and creation. This complete and total integration is genuine complete holiness!

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 103,1-2. 3-4.

8. 10. 12-13 (*Reads from Scripture*)

R: The Lord is kind and merciful.

L: Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all my being, bless his holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

R: The Lord is kind and merciful.

L: He pardons all your iniquities, heals all your ills. He redeems your life from destruction, crowns you with kindness and compassion.

R: The Lord is kind and merciful.

L: Merciful and gracious is the LORD, slow to anger and abounding in kindness. Not according to our sins does he deal with us, nor does he requite us according to our crimes.

R: The Lord is kind and merciful.

L: As far as the east is from the west, so far has he put our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has

compassion on those who fear him.

R: *The Lord is kind and merciful.*

Commentary on Ps 103:

This is a hymn of thanksgiving for the qualities of kindness and mercy inherent to God. The reason for the blessing and thanksgiving are God's acts of forgiveness, healing and redemption, fruit of His kindness and compassion that benefit the psalmist. From recognizing God's concrete acts on his life, the psalmist is able to penetrate the person of God: slow to anger, abounding in kindness and who deals with us according to his mercy, not on account of our human weakness and sinfulness. God's forgiveness takes on a cosmic dimension (east and west), and surpasses the human experience of fatherly compassion.

Second Reading: 1 Cor 3,16-23

L: A reading from the first letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians.

Brothers and sisters: Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for the temple of God, which you are, is holy. Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you considers himself wise in this age, let him become a fool, so as to become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in the eyes of God, for it is written: God catches the wise in their own ruses, and again: The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. So let no one boast about human beings, for everything belongs to you, Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world or life or death, or the present or the future: all belong to you, and you to Christ, and Christ to God.

The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Commentary on 1 Cor 3,16-23:

After laying down the foundational principles of Christian living, Paul right away faces the principal problem of rivalry and divisions in the community. Here, he gives a more profound reason for unity: you are the temple of God, and the Spirit lives in you. Therefore, you are holy. You are not called to serve your leaders and your organizers. They belong to you: they are your ministers, servants of God. You are not to serve the hierarchy; the hierarchy serves you because it belongs to you. You are the privileged place of encounter with Christ, not the temple building. But especially you who are the violated temples of God: the poor, the stranger, those who live in human misery and victims of injustice and oppression. This is so revolutionary that it can be misunderstood. So Paul makes a precaution: but you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God. So, you are not the center; Christ is your Center. The hierarchy serves you, and by serving you, is able to discover and serve Christ in you! You must therefore be united as one Christian community!

Gospel: Matt 5,38-48

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And with your spirit.

P: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

C: Glory to you, Lord.

P: Jesus said to his disciples: "You have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I say to you, offer no resistance to one who

is evil. When someone strikes you on your right cheek, turn the other one as well. If anyone wants to go to law with you over your tunic, hand over your cloak as well. Should anyone press you into service for one mile, go for two miles. Give to the one who asks of you, and do not turn your back on one who wants to borrow.

“You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what recompense will you have? Do not the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brothers only, what is unusual about that? Do not the pagans do the same? So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Commentary on Matt 5,38-48:

The subversion by Jesus of that basic natural human behavior is now brought to its most profound level. Against the dictum: an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, the ancient law of revenge that is also found as a tendency in the heart of every human being, Jesus proposes a radically new alternative: offer no resistance to one who is evil. The law of vengeance in fact corrupts the human relationship and one's relationship with God, because one is made violent and is forced to inflict the same harm one received from the evil one. Thus, he is made evil himself, dehumanized and alienated

from his true identity. This Jesus' argument leads to the real subversive motive behind this subversion of ordinary human behavior and legalized violence. Love! The sweet subversion of love! The love proposed by the Sermon on the Mount is radically a love without limits. It does not seek anything in return, an unconditional love that reflects the perfect love of the Father. The Father's love is perfect because it allows the sun to shine and the rain to fall on the good and the bad, neighbor and enemy. By imitating this kind of love – raising our human way of loving to that of God's way of loving – we are able to construct a society that is truly just, radically new and genuinely peaceful. This is a love that allows the gradual process of conversion of everyone who is both sinner and saint at the same time; a love whose effect of conversion takes place in the encounter between subjects; a love that transforms the world by bringing into the center those in the periphery, and into the periphery those at the center, so that they will consciously share the same sense of human history, the same sense of life of struggle and faith; and the same sense of a common human destiny: the One and Only God encountered in Jesus. God's perfect love, to which we are all invited, is truly our identity, and our real ultimate destiny!

Join Fr. Ben Alforque of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart in **GOSPEL BREAK**, a short yet entertaining and insightful discussion of this Sunday's Gospel on YouTube. Visit gospelbreak.wordpress.com. Or scan this QR code with your Smartphone or tablet.



Homily - We, the Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, are made holy through the subversive acts of love without limits.

Summary of the Sunday Reading Message	Concrete description of the poor people and their situation	Reflection/ Points for reflection/ Call/ Challenge
We, the Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, are made holy through the subversive acts of love without limits.	What are the concrete things that you do as a basic ecclesial community that help you become aware of the ills of society and of the alternative of God's Reign?	What does unconditional love mean in your life today? How is this love without limits a sweet way of subversion?

Profession of Faith

A: I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will

come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of the Faithful:

P: Dear sisters and brothers, we now bring to God our Father the prayers and petitions of the people and of the world. Let our response be: Lord, help us to love without limits.

R: Lord, help us to love without limits.

L: Let us pray for the Church: that being a Church of the Poor spread over the world, that she may continue to proclaim God's love without limits, our God who is slow to anger and rich in mercy and compassion. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, help us to love without limits.

L: For our Holy Father, Pope Francis I, for the bishops, priests, deacons, for those in consecrated life and for all those who are entrusted with the care and administration of the church as People of God: that may continue to administer the people with profound pastoral care and helpful understanding of the law. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, help us to love without limits.

L: For world leaders and all those entrusted with governance and administration of the goods of the

earth: that they may run their governments and peoples not with coercion and force of the law, but with justice and mercy. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, help us to love without limits.

L: For all of us who serve the Church all over the world, that we may generously share our resources on this St. Peter Pence Sunday for the Church, especially for the poor and the weak. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, help us to love without limits.

L: For our beloved dead: that in the forgiveness of their sins, they may find eternal rest in the heart of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, help us to love without limits.

L: For our special intentions, in the silence of our hearts. *(pause)*... Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, help us to love without limits.

P: Lord our God, we ask You to strengthen us in our spirit of generosity and sharing, without counting the costs and the returns, so that the whole Church, through the charities of the Holy Father throughout the world, may be served by Your love without limits. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R: Amen.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Preparation of the Altar and the Gifts

P: Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation...

C: Blessed be God forever.

P: Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters), that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

C: May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings

P: As we celebrate your mysteries, O Lord, with the observance that is your due, we humbly ask you, that what we offer to the honor of your majesty may profit us for salvation. Through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Prayer of the Eucharist

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And with your spirit.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them up to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right and just.

A: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Acclamation

P: The mystery of faith.

A: Save us, Savior of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.

(Concluding the Eucharistic Prayer, the priest says:)

P: Through him, and with him, and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, for ever and ever.

C: Amen.

Communion Rite

The Lord's Prayer

Doxology

C: For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever.

Sign of Peace

P: Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles; Peace ... Who live and reign for ever and ever.

C: Amen.

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And with your spirit.

P: Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Breaking of the Bread

A: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world ... grant us peace.

Communion

P: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

A: Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Prayer after Communion

P: Let us pray. Grant, we pray, almighty God, that we may experience the effects of the salvation which is pledged to us by these mysteries. Through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Final Blessing

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And with your spirit.

P: Bow down your heads and pray for God's blessing: May the peace of God which surpasses all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

C: Amen.

P: And may almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: Go in peace, loving God and serving your neighbor.

C: Thanks be to God. ■

**We are made
holy through
acts of
unconditional
love.**

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