



6th SUNDAY of ORDINARY TIME **YEAR C – February 17, 2019**

God speaks to us today about a blessing and a curse. The beatitudes are the blessings and trusting in human beings is the curse. (Jeremiah 17:5-8 and Luke 6:17, 20-26)

When is the last time you heard a sermon on the subject of mortal sin? It still exists and if we don't deal with it, it can separate us from God and from the people we love. It can kill our spiritual life. That's why it's called mortal sin. It is a mortal wound and in order to heal it, we must know what the wound is all about and turn to our Lord for the healing.

As you know, in order to be guilty of a mortal sin, the matter must be grave, the person must know it is grave before the sin is committed and the person must freely choose to commit the sin. Not everyone who commits a mortal sin is guilty of a mortal sin.

We talk about objective morality in the Catholic Church. But we need to add that imputability always requires a subject who is acting - and only God can decide the level of guilt in any given situation.

Take the matter of abortion as an example. You have to be living in a cave not to know what the Catholic Church teaches about abortion. It is grave matter and in the objective order, it is always grave matter. When a woman has an abortion, there are all kinds of circumstances that affect the imputability and the level of guilt. Only God can read the human heart. The priest in confession cannot do that. And if he says he can, find another priest.

Deliberately missing Mass on a weekend, for a Catholic, is grave matter. The emphasis here is on the word deliberate. Then there are all those things that people usually think of when they talk about mortal sins - the sins of the flesh - masturbation, pornography, pre-marital sex, adultery, artificial contraception, sterilization etc. While the focus is usually on the sixth and ninth commandment, the truth is grave matter can include any commandment - not just the sixth and the ninth.

The teaching of our church is clear on the subject of the Sacrament of Penance. We must use the sacrament when we are conscious of mortal sin. We can also use the sacrament at other times to receive the grace we need to deal with our venial sins and all the temptations that are part of life here on earth.

It is not the purpose of the person in the pulpit to tie up heavy burdens and place them on the backs of people in the pew. The purpose of the person in the pulpit is to bring the healing grace of Jesus to those who need it. Hypocrisy, arrogance, condemning others from the pulpit can be a serious sin for the person in the pulpit. God gets to judge those things too.

All of us need the healing Grace of God. For a few moments in silence, reflect on your use of the sacrament of reconciliation. How does it fit into your spiritual life?

forgive
US OUR TRESPASSES
AS WE
forgive
THOSE WHO TRESPASS
AGAINST US