

# Homily for the 20<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

August 17-18, 2019

Readings: Jeremiah 38:4-6, 8-10; Hebrews 12:1-4; Luke 12:49-53

Preacher: Colleen Schantz

It's about hearing the invitation. Accepting the challenge. And knowing you might need to shake things up in order to get your message across.

Sound familiar? A lot like Jesus and the first followers and the many after that.

As we focus on the gospel, we see the passion and the enthusiasm and the frustration of Jesus as he reflects on the way the world has responded to his coming and his invitation to live a just life.

Your place in the family was so central to your place in society. It was how you were defined; how you were known. Almost more precious than gold. So if families were to be divided, then there was a call to shake things up and to take to heart your true identity.

Even within our community of believers there are divisions. We see things differently from each other causing pain and isolation in our family of Christ.

Yes, Jesus calls us to be uncomfortable and to invite one another to examine how their lives are true to the Gospel. Are we called to leave the slavery of addiction, arguing or selfishness, social status or even our own will?

I invite you to recall a time when you had to go against the social norm. What did you leave behind to follow truth and justice? And when did you leave a preconceived notion to invite in the truth?

I recall a time when a divorced woman came to me, wrongly thinking she was being excluded from communion. This woman was so broken she felt cut off from the life of the church. I reached out to her and welcomed her

into God's love in a way she had not experienced before. Her fear kept her from the love she needed. Because someone had told her she was not wanted, she thought that God had abandoned her. This was not true. She was still welcome at the table of Love.

The core message in this Gospel is the outstanding love of God that bridges the divisions in our lives. She did not need to be separated from the one thing that would be there for her! Jesus wants her to know she was loved with a radical love called God. This Gospel and lived experience demonstrate our need for attentive listening with the heart, communication and relationship all in cooperation with God's grace in healing divisions.

The psalmist declares. He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. And, he says, "My sheep hear my voice; I know them and they follow me." God knows us as we seek to help live his message and to build up the body of Christ.

May we not dismiss the strength of the family we do have. For Jesus says, "my mother and my brother are those who do my will." Some divisions will be faced by living love, a radical love.

Listen, wait and trust that the fire he baptized us with will guide us and arm us in strength. The person God calls us to be is authentic. The way is rocky and narrow.

But know the narrow way is broad enough to include all whom the Lord has given to Jesus and he will not let us stray. Be that person that creates a stir so that true identity can be claimed in the now and not yet kingdom of God.