

Father Rudy's Reflections

The Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

July 9, 2023

Come to me and I will give you rest

My Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Lord,

Today we live in a world where truth is debatable, technological pace distracts us, and society seems broken, bent, uncertain, and unable to unite. In many respects, a sense of sadness surrounds us these days, as some of us operate out of fear, loneliness, hopelessness, and an unwillingness to offer ourselves to others or even in service to our Lord. We look inward for answers, remain in our self-imposed boxes, and often project negativity about any new concept that might improve our lives. It is a shame we cannot get out of our own way, yet there is a way forward for all of us.

Today is the Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, yet the Gospel today is anything but "ordinary"; it is a scriptural masterpiece, as Jesus, in simple narrative, invites us to "come" to him to heal our weary hearts:

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light" (Matthew 11:28-30).

These verses, often recited at funerals and investitures, call us to discipleship, armed with all he has taught us during his time on earth. Jesus alone will place a yoke upon us that will lighten the overwhelming load of suffering and anxieties we face. In seeking him, we will find solace and a way to strengthen our souls. Jesus's words are simple, yet because our lives *seem* so complex and challenging, these words are difficult to embrace, adapt, and embody. If we are truly disciples of Christ, we must carry his grace and mercy with us wherever we go and be aware of opportunities to show his presence both in our lives and to those who cross our paths each day. Jesus is "God with us" every day of our lives (Matthew 1:23).

"And many times, in the face of a burden of life or a situation that saddens us, we try to talk about it with someone who listens to us, with a friend, with an expert. . . . This is a great thing to do, but let us not forget Jesus. Let us not forget to open ourselves to him and to recount our life to him, to entrust people and situations to him. Perhaps there are 'areas' of our life that we have never opened up to him and which have remained dark, because they have never seen the Lord's light. Each of us has our own story. And if someone has this dark area, seek out Jesus; go to a missionary of mercy; go to a priest; go. . . . But go to Jesus, and tell Jesus about this. Today he says to each one: Take courage; do not give in to life's burdens; do not close yourself off in the face of fears and sins. 'Come to me!'"—Pope Francis

Yours in Christ,
Father Rudy