

What is our game plan

Cycle C - 3rd Sunday of OT - 2022

The gospel I just read is the very beginning of Luke's gospel,
in it he says something very interesting...

Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events
that have been fulfilled among us...

When I hear that, I think of the many things.

1--I remember what one person told me.

If there is a disagreement among two people there are three sides to the story.

What person "A" says, what person "B" says and the truth.

2--I think of the line many historians use. History is written by the winners.

3--I think of the different news outlets today and how they view the people in the news.

Some news outlets will promote the individual as a saint.

Other news outlets will portray that same person as evil incarnate.

Somewhere in the midst of all that is being said, is the truth.

And when I think of "The truth" I think of what Pilate said, "Truth, what is truth."

Is it was I think."

Is it what Fr. Jim thinks."

"Is it what I think the Bible says?"

Is it what Fr. Jim says the Bible says?"

I have a feeling that the same thing was happening in New Testament times.

All kinds of things were being said about who Jesus was.

Everything from "He was the Son of God." To was a shyster.

From what I understand, Theophilus was a patron of sorts,

and commissioned Luke to write an orderly account, of who Jesus was.

Why Luke? Scholars who study Greek, say that Luke's Greek is a more refined Greek,
indicating that he had an advanced education.

Luke also focused on miracle stories—especially medical miracles,
so they hypothesized that he was doctor.

It also tells me that there were a lot of stories floating around.

Some true, some exaggerated, some merely pious bedtimes stories,
and some were probably outright lies.

Not much different than what is happening today,
in regards to any of the stories we hear on the news.

Theophilus does not know what, or who to believe...

but trusts Luke to write an orderly account of who Jesus was.

What we do know, is that Luke's story prevailed.

Through the passage of time. People came to see it for what it was...
the truth about who Jesus was.

Although there were many stories that were being passed around, Luke's story prevailed.

Why, because it was accepted as the truth, by the people, and eventually Church...
which is why it has been included in the canon of scripture.

But we must also realize acceptance did not take place overnight.

A week after Luke finished the last word, his gospel was not being proclaimed as holy scripture.
The final books of scripture were not settled until the three councils of

Rome, Hippo and Carthage, about 350 years later.

What I want to know is what kind of response did Jesus get when he said,

“Today this reading is being fulfilled in your hearing.”

Because what he was really saying is, “All those things that the prophet Isaiah was talking about...
well he was talking about me.”

It would be akin to me standing at this ambo and saying, I am Jesus Christ.

If I said that, many of you would be saying to yourselves, “Isn’t he that kid from Nipawin?”

You would either phone the Bishop, and ask for a different pastor,
or call the paddy wagon;

which is exactly the response that Jesus got from the people.

If you read further in the gospel, the people questioned, “Isn’t this Joseph’s son.”

When Jesus continued to proclaim himself as the anointed one,
they people sprang up and wanted to throw him off a cliff.

When we hear something we don’t think is true, whether it is true or not,

we can get so caught up in what is right and what is not right, that we forget the mission of Jesus.

The words that Jesus speaks in this gospel, at the very beginning of his public ministry,
are his mission statement.

He came to bring good news to the poor, proclaim release to captives,
recovery of sight to the blind, let the oppressed go free
and proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.

The truth of the Word of God is eternal,

meaning it wasn’t just pertinent when it was written 2000 years ago,

it isn’t just pertinent today,

it contains truths that are true, no matter what date it is.

Which means if we are getting so caught up in determining the truth of current events:

Do you belong to the group that thinks COVID is real

Do you belong to the group that support Pope Francis

Do you belong to the group that believes in climate change.

Which is really a variation of what St. Paul was referring to when he said,

“I belong to Paul,” or “I belong to Apollos,” or “I belong to Cephas,”
or “I belong to Christ.”

If we get so caught up defending a positions that:

1) the Good News is not proclaimed, 2) Captives are not released,

3) the blind are not allowed to see, 4) the oppressed are still oppressed,

5) the year of the Lord’s favor is not proclaimed,

then we are not participating in then mission of Christ.

A Protestant once told me, “If you Catholics ever got together, you would be dangerous.”

If you remember the second reading, St. Paul’s analogy of the Body of Christ...as a unified body.

The other parts of the body do not say to the ear,

“You can’t be a part of this body, or you aren’t a part of this body.

None of us would think about cutting off our own ear,

because we didn’t feel it was part of our body.

Unfortunately the reality is, we are more concerned with whether we are right or wrong,
than we are of actually undertaking the mission of Christ.

Maybe we need to tape the last line of today's gospel on our bathroom mirrors,
so we see them every day-- "Today this scripture is being fulfilled."

If we are not bringing the good news to the poor, proclaiming release to captives,
helping the blind to see, freeing the oppressed
and proclaiming the year of the Lord's favor,
then we are not participating in the mission of Christ.

I will go so far as to say, if we are not participating in the mission of Christ,
we are merely setting our own mission,
which is exactly what Adam and Eve did in the garden of Eden,
they wanted to be the ones who declared what was right and what was wrong.

Last week I mentioned the world wide synod.

I mentioned that the pope is trying to get the opinions of every Catholic.
Some people are still a little confused, and I can't blame them.
I am still trying to get a grasp on it.

Another way of looking at the synod is determining what it is not.
It is not an opportunity to tell the pope all the things he should or should not be doing.
It is not an opportunity to tell everyone who will listen
what you think the Church should be doing.
It doesn't take a world-wide synod to do that.
I have a list, longer than my arm,
of things people have been saying the church should be doing.

But we cannot focus on what is wrong with the Church.

We need to focus on what is right.
And the only way to do that, is to ask all the Catholics,
Do you feel heard by the Church? What can the Church do to support you?
The synod is not asking what you think should be happening,
the synod is asking you to reflect on what your experience of Church.
Not what it should be doing out there (point) but what it is doing in here (heart).

I was watching a video of a few bishops talking about the synod. Two things struck me

1--One of the bishops asked the question,
"Either this synod is a work of the Holy Spirit or it is not."
If it is, which I believe that it is, we need to support that action as much as possible.
If it is of the Spirit and we are not supporting it,
we are fighting against the very spirit of God,
and like I have been saying for 27 years, in the end God wins.

2--The second thing that one of the bishops said was,
"I don't know where this synod will lead us."
I had to laugh when he said that,
because if we knew where this synod would lead us,
we would not have to undertake it.

Thinking back to Vatican II, there wasn't a bishop in the world,
that knew what was going to happen at the end of Vatican II.
Yet it was an opportunity for the Church to make itself pertinent in today's world.
I believe that the same spirit is driving this synod.
I believe that this synod is leading us Catholics to become dangerous.

over

In the first reading, there is an interesting response to the Reading of "the Book."
The people weep. Was it out of a sense that they have become an unfaithful people
who are accepting the error of their ways?
Or was it a weeping out of pure joy?
In the end it doesn't matter...they are told to rejoice.
In the end the only thing that is important
is that they have become one body, with one mind, with one heart and soul...
that they have become one with one another and they have become one with God.
In the end that is the goal of the synod,
that we become one body, mind, heart and soul,
one with our God, and one with one another.
Let us all strive to build up the Body of Christ.