

HOMILY ~ 18th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME AUGUST 3/4, 2024

"Your mind must be renewed by a spiritual revolution so that you can put on the new self that has been created in God's way."

Change happens all the time. Everything changes. Sometimes change is good. "A change is as good as a rest," they say. Sometime change is bad, like an illness or bereavement. Change can happen slowly, an evolving process that is sometimes difficult to see. Change can happen quickly, a revolutionary change that changes everything suddenly.

Paul tells us today to change, not a slow, considered, comfortable change, but a fast revolutionary change. A complete change. We must put on a new self, as if we are putting on a new set of clothes, a new self created in God's way. This must be a good change, as it will bring us closer to God. But any change described as revolutionary has to be scary.

What am I going to lose? Will I like the new me? What will I have to do? Am I going to be able to change? How do I change? Dozens more questions like these should be running through your heads.

Or are you thinking, do I need to change? Have you already got your life right? Are you already living in a self that has been created in God's way? I know I am still trying to change, still looking for ways to become more like the person God created me to be rather than the person I have evolved into during my life. I think I am evolving into the man God wants me to be. I have to admit I am scared to think that revolution not evolution is what is called for.

We are given a huge and historic example of revolutionary change in our Reading from Exodus today. Everything has changed for the Jewish people. They have left their homes and security, and followed God and Moses into the desert. They are scared, and they are hungry. They start to worry, then they start to complain. They challenge God, and he provides for them. He sends them quail and manna, bread from heaven. Here is a good lesson for us: *Change is not easy*. When it gets difficult, ask for help; your father in heaven will provide. If He can feed two and a half million people every day for forty years in a desert, he can help you with your worries.

The same Exodus story is picked up and quoted in our Gospel Reading today. As we heard last week, a large crowd have just been fed from a small boy's packed lunch, and they have now followed Jesus across the lake.

The people believe he might be the messiah prophesied in scripture and are hoping he will prove this. The

miracle of the loaves and fish shows he is a prophet, but it was just earthly bread he gave them to eat. The messiah would give them manna from heaven, as Moses had, bread directly from God not of human making. In their concern for bread and manna, their desire to see scripture fulfilled as they thought it should be, they missed the real miracle. They missed the truth, they missed Christ.

I have to be honest, I would, I am sure have made the same mistake; and this shows me I still need to change.

Christ goes on to reveal to them that, true bread from God comes from heaven and gives life to the world, and the He is that bread. All we have to do is come to Him and believe in Him.

One of the most wonderful privileges I have as a minister in this Church is to distribute Holy Communion. I get to stand at the front of Church, smile and share my joy with each one of you as you receive Christ, the bread of life. Many of you are privileged enough to receive the Eucharist, Christ in the form of Bread and Wine, some receive a blessing. We all, in those moments, have the chance to turn to Christ, to believe in Him, to never be hungry or thirsty again. To start the revolution within ourselves. To become the creation God intended us to be.

Aren't you just a little curious to see what that will be like? It is your choice.

Are you ready? Will you receive Christ? Will you believe in Christ? Will you change? Will you start your personal revolution?

And remember, if you do decide to change, when you get worried, ask your Father for help. He will be there.

Peace,
Deacon Don