

Deacon Bob Corsaro

Homily

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time: Year A

Have you ever taken a child fishing?

Witnessed the look of wonder on their face as the fish is pulled from the blue water?

As the fish flops around, they giggle as they try to grab it, asking what kind is it ?!!!

Fish, especially saltwater fish come in all kinds of different colors, shapes and sizes.

Its good to have a book nearby by that helps you **identify** what you are catching.

And after the fish are caught..., fish stories are born.

Stories about the size of the fish, the fight it put up, or IN MY CASE one that got away.

And as anyone who fishes knows, If you throw the fish back, it continues to grow...which leaves room for increasing the size of the fish each time the story is told.

Telling a story of a personal experience gives witness and testimony to the event.

And It's fun to share a story with someone, see their eyes light up as they too get caught up in the moment.

MORE IMPORTANTLY Possibly a seed will be planted, encouraging the listener to experience a similar event first hand.

When an experience is shared, isn't it nice to hear it from a person who tells it humbly.

Today's Gospel is a continuance of the humble testimony of John the Baptist.

And how did John **identify** Jesus... the Lamb of God? Large crowds were coming forth to be baptized.

We know John didn't have a book close by with the picture of Jesus in it.

John said twice in the Gospel reading. "I did not know him".

John was told by the one who sent him to watch for the Spirit to come down and remain upon him.

John saw this and testified that Jesus is the Lamb of God...the Son of God.

It is not my intention to jump ahead here in the gospel readings, but I feel compelled to share the following with you:

Picture this:

On the next day John was sitting around with 2 of his disciples and as Jesus walked by John said to his disciples , “Behold the lamb of God”.

One of Johns disciples happened to be Andrew, the brother of Simon, whom Jesus would eventually call Peter.

And Andrew went to find Simon to tell him, “We have found the messiah!

Wow! Talk about a seed being planted as a result of testimony, and the listeners wanting to experience an event first hand.

This seed planted is to take hold in the shape of discipleship, witnessing the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus.

To know this story is to get caught up in the cycle of listening, telling and retelling...the cycle of discipleship.

Like John, we are called in our baptismal covenant to be witness to the work of Christ on behalf of all humankind.

John the Baptist **found Jesus**, the lamb of God through **baptism** and the **Holy Spirit** !

What a special moment this must have been for John. To recognize and identify Jesus the Lamb of God and To Point Jesus out to others.

You know the image of a lamb also applies to us. It is very easy for us, as lambs, to go astray with the distraction and noise of every day life.

Job pressures, raising children, paying bills. Fighting illness. coping with grief, balancing time spent between studies and friends, we are all dealing with our own burdens.

And if we take a look around us, in our local communities we witness lambs going astray: increased violence in our cities, unnecessary killing, drugs, fear, poverty, social injustice and oppression.

I attended a meeting with the Mayor Duffy recently, and he spoke of the inner city kids.

Kids Who wake up hungry, with no food in the house.. A hunger most of us have never experienced. The effects of this hunger spills out into the streets.

Later that evening, I Thought... what about spiritual hunger? What is missing in our lives?

I have a friend who lives well.

A beautiful home. Beautiful wife. Good Job. Belongs to a Country Club.

Plenty of food to eat when he gets out of bed in the morning.

But he tells me deep down he is not happy. There is an emptiness that he cannot fill. A hunger he cannot satisfy.

A new set of Golf Clubs provides a temporary quick fix as does the new sports car in the garage..
But the empty feeling soon returns. He feels like a lost lamb.

I asked him if he has seen God in his life lately. He didn't know how to answer this.

Jesus tells us that in the least of our brethren is where we will find him. When we visit the sick, feed the poor, we are visiting and feeding Jesus.

When we do these things we are feeding others spiritual food and in turn are receiving spiritual nourishment ourselves. We are **identifying** with Christ. We are walking with Christ.

So how do we begin to discern –**identify** Jesus, the lamb of God in Our lives?

Through the movement of the Holy Spirit, as John did?

Look to the sacrament of Baptism.

The Spirit gives us sight and hearing to discern where Christ is to be found in our world.

Through baptism we are called to be led by the spirit, to witness and to live our faith.

Maybe too, we pay attention to the little things:

God said, be still and know that I am. Look into the eyes of a newborn baby and witness the miracle of birth.....Do You See God There?

Be still and feel the miracle of love in your heart for your children..... Do You See God There?

When you shake the hand of the person standing next to you in church, and you say peace be with you, know that you are truly sharing the miracle of the peace of Christ with them.

We must not be afraid to enter into this cycle of discipleship.

As John did, Identify this wonderful gift of grace, This sacrificial Lamb who humbly took our sinful nature in his own body, and through his death and resurrection conquered sin and death, with the promise of eternal life.

Allow this gift, this good news to fill the emptiness in our lives and the lives of others as they too come to know him.