

Homily
July 5th 2009
14th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Ezekiel 2:2-5
2 Corinthians 12:7-10
Mark 6:1-6

Deacon Bob Corsaro

Happy 4th of July to you all

Well here we are! Our new mass schedule is upon us!
Anyone sitting in your seat?
Remember... NO Pew Wars!

To make sure that there are no **Serious** injuries as some of you grapple for your usual seats, I brought these! (remove boxing gloves from sack).

Actually I brought them for another reason as you will see in a moment.

How many of you here are sports fans?

We all know the benefit of home field advantage don't we!

Watch a boxing match and see the hometown favorite cheered on at pre fight introduction. The crowd goes nuts.

Then watch as the visiting boxer is announced, boo, hiss, throw the bum out.....

Ever see the hometown favorite booed?
When it happens...it just doesn't seem right.

In today's Gospel, we see the hometown figure Jesus, being booed.

That's right...Jesus is not received well by the crowd. He is rejected by the people he loved and grew up with. He was one of their own.

You see, in Jesus' Mediterranean world a son is expected to follow in his fathers footsteps, but not go beyond them. If a father was a carpenter, his was expected to be one as well, but nothing more.

When the people in the synagogue heard Jesus' teaching, many were astonished by his wisdom. But they rejected him...after all he was the carpenter...nothing more!

Did you notice the offhanded insult? They called him Mary's son...not Joseph's son. In those days, the son would be identified by his father.

Their rejection of Jesus limited his ability to perform powerful deeds amongst them. Their lack of faith sent him on his way.

Its hard to be rejected by the people we love.....

How was Jesus feeling inside? How was Mary dealing with all of this?

He had been doing so much good before his visit home. He had just healed the bleeding woman and brought a little girl back to life! Jesus knows the positive effect faith can have on peoples lives, but his own community had little or no faith

We too can come to realize the power of faith.

Deni, put it in perspective for us 2 weeks ago, The storm may not disappear, but through Jesus we will find calm.

(Put gloves on)

CRISIS.. CRISIS is a part of our lives. Like the boxer who stands alone , facing an opponent that wants to knock him to the out.

He is prepared and trained well with good people in his corner. He is prepared to face the crisis.

BUT, we don't always have the luxury of readying ourselves for a crisis, a fight!

Bam.... A stiff jab...the boss lays you off,
Or out of the blue, your spouse wants a divorce.

Or

Pow.... A right hook...1/2 of your 401K retirement is lost in the stock market.

Or

Whack...an uppercut to the chin... you are told you have a dreadful disease

Or

The knock out punch....a loved one dies suddenly.

And once hit hard....the gloves come off.....reality sets in...
And you are hit with bare knuckled combinations. The wind is knocked out of you.

You stagger back to your corner of the ring, and oh no!...where have your corner people gone? Where is your trainer...where is your water?

You are all alone and expected to go back out and fight the good fight.

How did Jesus deal with crisis?

We know he spent much time praying to the Father.

In this Gospel, we will soon see Jesus after rejection, faithfully moving forward and soon commissioning the twelve, sending them forth to walk with those who are suffering.....in crisis.

To Love one another.

There is a ministry here at our parish, The Stephen Ministry, that trains, commissions and sends forth fellow parishioners, some sitting in the pews right now(maybe in your usual seat) to walk with those who are facing a tough time.

A nationwide ministry, based out of St Louis Missouri,

It is a totally confidential ministry.

The identity of those receiving care in this ministry remains private.

A Stephen minister is a child of God who walks beside a hurting person, A caring Christian who really **listens**, who receives 50 hours of training, in how to provide distinctively Christian care.

A trustworthy confidant who will faithfully meet with you on a weekly basis for as long as your need persists.

7 years ago, as a Stephen Minister, I was assigned to an elderly gentleman who had recently lost his wife. Soon after, he was diagnosed with an incurable disease. He was alone.

The first night I met with him, as I drove to his house I prayed to God for this man and myself. To be with us.

As I sat with this man, his tears flowed as he informed me of the burdens he was carrying. He told me that he felt God had forgotten him.

I listened and responded, “If God has forgotten you, why did he put us two together this evening?”

At that moment, I saw, in this mans face a tremendous relief of burden.

Those words I spoke to him did not come from me. Something very divine was at work that evening. The grace of God.

You see, TODAY...here....

Jesus is enabling us to care for each other in our own faith community.

We all come here today, with our own stories.

Is life a bit more than you can handle alone right now?

Could you benefit from having someone who would listen and walk with you through this difficult time?

Someone to sit in your corner and offer you that cup of cold water.

There is no need to go it alone.

Please consider calling our anonymous Stephen Ministry hotline at ext 340 here. WE are also listed in the bulletin.

On another note: If you sense a possible calling, a gentle urging to become a Stephen Minister feel free to call me here at ext 346. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have about this wonderful ministry.

Also, there will be Stephen Ministers standing at the doors as you exit today. Say hello and take a brochure with you.

So as we come forth to share in the body and blood of Christ today,
Let us discard our boxing gloves, and wear soft lambskin gloves
To care for one another, as the lamb of God has commanded us to do.

May God continue to bless us and the wonderful country we live in.