

Homily 7-4-10 year C - Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Recently, someone told me, if a preacher were to go on for 20 minutes he would throw zero dollars in the collection basket,
15 minutes...\$5.00,
10 minutes.....\$15.00
and under 5 minutes...\$25.00.

I chuckled to myself thinking Geez, I wonder what a simple blessing (+) would fetch.

Then he added ... if a preacher hasn't struck gold in under 5 minutes, he probably won't. Wow!

Now its awfully good for a preacher to "strike gold" under 5,
But its not so good to be impatient with the word of God.
Kind of mirrors our "we want everything now society."

BUT what is golden for one person, may hold little or no value for another.

What you hunger for in your heart this morning, isn't necessarily the hunger of the person sitting next to you.
BUT we all need love and peace... the peace and love that comes From knowing Jesus.

God loves us through the Word, and if our hearts are open and receptive, we will find peace in it.

Reflecting on this man's statement. I said to my wife Sue,
"You know...its these little golden moments of life experience, God speaking to us through others, that cause us to pause, with open hearts to think about what is important to us.

And that is exactly what Jesus was asking his 72 to do as he sent them forth. To scatter gold. That is,

To preach the good news...Humbly share his Love...his compassion...his healing.... And to gather a harvest of openhearted believers.

The 72 were sent forth as lambs among wolves. Their very defenselessness would cause them to Depend more on God.
Trust in God

As Christians we are all called to share his love, his compassion, with others....

And I have to tell you, in doing so....we receive a clearer picture of who we are and the true purpose of the life that Jesus is leading us to. This takes trust.

Trusting God. This is where we strike gold in our lives.

(open suitcase) so here I have a United States of America Gold dollar coin. Happy birthday America! (Every one say” Happy Birthday America!)

And clearly across the front of the golden coin, is struck: In God we trust!

Now here is another Gold coin, a new presidential \$1 coin. These are the new coins of the fathers of our country.

And you know what? I don't see “In God we trust” on the front or the back.

To find God, I need a magnifying glass, as “In God we trust” is inscribed on the **EDGE** of the coin. One must search very closely to find God there.

What does this have in common with the society we live in today?

What with the hungry, the imprisoned, the impoverished, the homeless, the unemployed, the abused, the addicted... the list goes on and on.

So where do we find God? On the **Edges**...barely visible, we must look closely to see God and walk towards the edge to enter in. And Jesus said in

Matthew chapter 25: "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me."

"Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me."

This my friends, is where we find the richness of knowing Jesus...The grace of Christ.

This is where we strike gold in Jesus.

Jesus encourages us to go forth . Trust in God.

Step out on the **edge**, out of our comfort zone.

Perhaps sending us forth, answering a gentle calling to ministry ?

Maybe the Stephen Ministry, caring for and walking with someone in crisis.

Maybe volunteering at a hospice house? Visit the homebound?

Visit a grieving neighbor? This week we have homeless families staying here as per of the Rain Ministry. One of our parishioners was preparing a spaghetti and meatball dinner for them. She told me, " Deacon Bob, I love doing this....

I cant get up in front of hundreds of people as a lector, I wouldnt feel comfortable being a Eucharistic minister, but I love to

cook..and this is the way I can help and love others”. You see, she is using a gift that God has given her....the care for others in need.

Or perhaps we are called to trust in God in another way.
When we are on the **edge**, experiencing difficulties in our own lives.

When we mourn the loss of a loved one. The loss of a job and loss of financial security.
The challenges we face as we try to care for aging parents...This is where, like the **edge** of the coin, trust in God, sometimes is not easy to find.

So maybe like the gospel says, we leave our suitcase behind, leave the material things behind...and take the time to go forth with the Love of Jesus.

We are on the **edge** here in this community, going forth and entering in, all the time, in various ways connecting with each other.

Gods Spirit and grace is to be found in our human experience.

The same spirit of God that was active in the life of Israel we heard in the 1st reading,
active in the life of the early Christian community we heard in the 2nd reading

It is active in our lives, our parish, our beloved country, our world today.

This week I witnessed the spirit in the eyes of a young grieving wife, a man who lost his mom, the resurgence of a man working through the depths of divorce, the pain in a man’s voice as his wife is in her final stages of life, A woman who faced the tough decision to place her mom in assisted care. A friend awaiting results of biopsy.

You see, this is where Jesus' plan of 2000 years ago comes into play, sending us forth to comfort, console and be a witness to the presence of the kingdom of God.

We enter into the edge when we enter into the suffering, **this is Holy ground**....where we are called to love and trust... to Connect to God's grace.

Like the **edge** of the coin, we begin to see, recognize the value of trust in God.

Friday, while working in my office here, I was clearing out an old filing cabinet and I came across the church bulletin of Father Ed's appointment here as our new pastor.

His Trusting God on the **edge** of new ministry, new beginnings here. His being sent forth to love us.

Take a moment this week, reflect on today's gospel, and consider the Spirit Alive here, the vibrant ministries that make this wonderful welcoming parish a living Example of the plan Jesus had as he sent the 72 out 2010 years ago.

May we continue to place our trust in God.

May God Bless our parish and may God bless America.

In the words of Abraham Lincoln:

With Malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds.