

## 23 SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME GOSPEL OF LUKE 2

1. Jesus would be the worst of politicians
  - a. Imagine any politician saying:
  - b. Anyone coming to me cannot be my disciple unless he hates father, mother, sister or brother
    - i. Those words probably be enough to have him crucified today
    - ii. Then he says we cannot be his disciples unless we renounce all our possessions
2. Contrast with our culture obsessed with choice – sell any thing with concept of choice
  - a. New Age spirituality tries to choose parts of religions for what feels good or exciting
    - i. Easily forgotten is that religion is a search for truth
    - ii. Every major religion demands commitment and discipline to find truth of God within it
    - iii. Studying various religions can be enlightening helping us to understand our own faith
    - iv. It is a violation and abuse to pick and choose only for the fun parts of any religion whether it is Buddhist, Christian or Native American
3. Perhaps a greater danger is making God a choice for us
  - a. We will worship and pay attention to him when it is convenient or pleasurable
    - i. the sacraments are high points on the road of discovering God as a friend and lover
    - ii. Easily become isolated events where we look nice to one another and feel excited
      - (1) do we see any connection between confirmation or communion and daily life
  - b. Most of us will not consciously dismiss God yet there are many things that distract us from God's will each day
  - c. One way to judge if we are dismissing Him is to examine our choices
    - i. What is really important to us will be the things that we spend our time and money on
4. Jesus however demands that do not dismiss God so easily
  - a. God has chosen and invited us to be his disciples – He has high expectations for each of us
    - i. In baptism our parents promised to prepare us to accept the tasks God is giving to us
    - ii. Each day in our life we have to decide, are we willing to accept this task
      - (1) In communion each week we proclaim ourselves to be followers of Jesus
5. In today's gospel Jesus warns us that there are costs to being his disciples

- a. If God is first in our life, all our decisions must show that God is most important
    - i. our talents and gifts are not just for our own benefit,
      - (1) God gives them to us so we serve his people
    - ii. children and family do not belong to us for our own private fulfillment
      - (1) God gives them to us to nurture and lead toward Him
    - iii. way we spend our time, is it to do will of God as we see it or do we even think of God during the average day
  - b. Part of the cost of following God is we cannot be people pleasers
    - i. We may sense that God is calling us to a different lifestyle than our parents may want
      - (1) some may choose to enter religious life instead of providing grandchildren
    - ii. May have to say no to children even when every other parent lets them do something
    - iii. Can mean risking offending friends if choose not to go along with them because they want to do something against our values or we need time alone with God
6. The parables: the cost of a tower or the king checking the risk of war
- a. What is cost of our decision to be a follower of Christ
7. Coming to Church Sundays, receiving communion are public statements that God is first in our life
- a. Jesus is asking us do we really want to take the risk of saying He is first on Sunday morning and then treating him as an afterthought the rest of the week.
  - b. God does not want us to choose him only when convenient, He is demanding a permanent commitment from us
  - c. God like jealous husband, wants us loyal to him first and always, does not want to share us with false idols
  - d. Will we accept that as cost of being a follower of Christ, member of his Body