

HOMILY FOR FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1. Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad, exult, exult with her
 - a. This kind of joy and enthusiasm might sound strange in context of faith
 - b. faith and worship seen as if they were difficult duties
 - c. there is the challenges of getting to church, probably pretty comfortable in homes
 - d. going outside and finding our place
 - e. When get to church may be distracted by everyday concerns,
 - f. thinking about day perhaps we do not even hear the readings
2. Churches have to struggle with how to get our attention
 - a. We grow up with instant gratification
 - b. TVs and movies have to provide immediate excitement
 - i. Read that movies, to appeal universally, provide less dialogue and more action
 - ii. More I work with computers, becomes frustrating if can't do something immediately
 - c. Danger in society is confuse joy with entertainment
 - d. Entertainment give quick satisfaction, but also become boring very quickly
 - i. Has to keep changing to keep our attention
3. Joy is what our faith is about
 - a. We are the in new Jerusalem where God is offering us comfort
 - b. In the Scriptures God is telling us we belong to Him
 - c. Today he offers us comfort images
 - d. God offers us nourishment and comfort like a mother gives to a nursing child
 - e. Like a mother fondles a little child in her lap so God says He will comfort us
4. When life is exciting and easy, these images are not so important
 - a. when we have to face pain and struggle, the comfort of a mother becomes very important
 - b. Isaiah in first reading talking to people led off to exile in a foreign country
 - i. Forced away from their homes
 - ii. Lost their possessions
 - iii. All they can see is either they will be slaves or they will be used to settle empty lands
 - c. To a people fearful of their future the prophet Isaiah offers hope
 - d. He promises that God has not forgotten them, He will bring them home and comfort them like a mother comforts her child
5. We may not have the burdens of a people carried off into slavery as Israel was then
 - a. We do however have our own struggles and worries
 - b. We face our own risks in earning a living
 - c. We may have concerns about our own health or the health of loved ones
 - d. No matter how secure we feel at the moment, we are very vulnerable
 - e. We could experience accidents or disasters that could destroy all we have built up
6. We can be tempted to use religion as a superstition to ward off danger
 - a. we want to control God so that God will protect us from dangers
 - b. If we only say enough prayers or the right actions maybe God through a kind of magic
 - c. Instead of seeing meaning in rituals, they become routines to protect ourselves
 - d. A bargain between us and God
7. Difficult for us is that God cannot be controlled
 - a. He has set up laws of nature and he allows us free will
 - b. If we get in way of natural actions we may get hurt
 - c. Or if we or others choose to act sinfully we can become victims or victimize others
8. Joy that God offers is not prevention of harm but rather that He can bring greater good out of evil
 - a. Jesus suffered a miserable death on the cross, but God gave Him new life in resurrection

- b. In my work with divorced people in Beginning Experience and Tribunal, I have seen people discover greater joy and freedom by surrendering their pain to God
 - c. Many alcoholics have discovered God's love for themselves through AA
9. In the midst of our own fears and worries God is offering us hope and joy today in this Eucharist
- a. He invites us to give our worries and fears to Him
 - b. He offers us hope in the words of the Scriptures
 - c. He gives us a hint of the joy of heaven by offering us his Body and Blood
 - d. We have to look behind the rituals, the appearances of bread and wine to see the glory of God
 - e. With eyes of faith we can realize that we are truly not alone
 - f. In this Eucharist we celebrate God's love and promise of hope
 - i. We are joined with believers of all time celebrating hope in God
 - g. In the Eucharist we also hear the promise of one day being fully at home with God
 - h. One day we will experience not just in faith but in visible experience the comfort that God promises us
 - i. He will comfort us as a mother comforts her child