

Sunday30—B7 homily by Fr. Gabor

Historical context of the first reading from Jeremiah: Judah, the southern kingdom of Israel is sliding into moral and religious self-destruction and turns toward false religions and gods, just like our society today. Jeremiah warns them with alarming words during most of his ministry, but as a fresh breath of air in this passage he also reminds the people of Judah of God's ultimate purpose, which is not punishment and destruction, but communion through gathering all his people together and living in love and harmony with Him and with one another.

This reading tells us that when God wants to gather his people it doesn't matter to Him what age, sex, illness or stigmas you have. He will comfort, lead, and satisfy the thirst for God's love and mercy of those who put their trust in Him. God will do this freely without you deserving this, because God is your heavenly parent, a Father of His people Israel and of the New Israel, the Church.

So the key message today is that God wants to gather us all back to himself regardless of how deep we are in our moral and religious darkness.

He also tells that He wants to do this through His priests; basically through all those who show sacrifices of love for God and neighbour, but remember you are also priests in terms of sharing the common priest. You became a common priest when you were baptised and anointed with Chrism on your forehead and the priest said that through this anointing you are empowered to take part in Christ, priestly ministry, which is about showing sacrifices of love. So gathering people back to God the Father is your responsibility as well.

The 2nd reading refers to Christ as the priest to whom the Father said from Heaven at His baptism: You are my Son, today I have become your Father. The Father has said the same to you when you were baptised: You are my child, today I have become your Father. This is your true identity, regardless of whether you have sinned or not. So live according to your true identity, ie. show sacrifices of love and this way gather others back to God, especially your own children and friends. Help them also to know their true identity; ie. that they are God's children.

In the Gospel reading we witness the various ways by which Christ gathers the Father's people back to Him. We see how the prophecy of Jeremiah is fulfilled through the healing of the blind. By calling Jesus the Son of David, the blind beggar expresses His faith that Jesus is the Saviour,

because 'Son of David' was one of the titles of the expected Messiah. To profess publicly that Jesus is the Messiah is a powerful expression of faith, and it can have a healing effect physically as well, and you can be healed physically if God wants it, which we witness in the Gospel reading.

So when Jesus heals the blind physically He actually confirms the faith of the blind man. Faith is our true light, because it gives sight to our spiritual eyes. Jesus heals and confirms the faith, the true light of the blind man, in front of others can see but do not yet believe, so that they also seek to have faith, the true light, and so may see and hear the words of the Father through which the Father is calling us back to Himself.

Today people respond with faith in the Father when you respond to their greatest needs. So try to find out what are the most important needs of people who live around you and try to respond to them in the name of Jesus, not just as an act of good will. So make it clear that when you try to help, you do it out of faith in Jesus. Otherwise they will never associate your good acts with faith in God and will not come to believe in Him and will not gather back to Him.