

ICCH
International Catholic Community of Heidelberg
St. Michael's Church
Kirschgartenstr. 35, 69126 Heidelberg Südstadt
06221/13020 – office Fr. Christof Heimpel

Today's readings:
Is 66:10-14c | Gal 6:14-18 | Lk 10:1-9

Welcome Father John

July 3rd, 2016 – 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

In the gospel today Jesus observes very pointedly how completely he has given his authority to his disciples, who are enthralled over it; he says: "I have observed Satan fall like lightning from the sky. Behold, I have given you the power to 'tread upon serpents' and scorpions and upon the full force of the enemy and nothing will harm you". Jesus then gives them a solemn warning, saying "Nevertheless, do not rejoice because the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice because your names are written in heaven".



He said this since if we rejoice because the spirits are subject to us then we are joining the world and its way of thinking, rather than being crucified to it, to borrow St. Paul's words from his letter to the Galatians. To put this in terms of our own experience, when we pray we rejoice when a prayer is "answered" according to our desires; should we not rejoice all the more over our sharing in the cross of Christ and the Kingdom he announced? By being excited about our prayer coming to fulfillment we may indeed be pursuing a noble and worthy goal—the healing of a loved one, for instance—yet we are skewing the true priority of relationships that ought to prevail in our spiritual lives, preferring the gift to the giver of the gift and in the process undervaluing both!

As an antidote to this inversion of values we see in Isaiah the prophet the image of Jerusalem as a sort of mother figure nursing and cradling her baby. As any child grows from infancy it receives many benefits from its mother, but it always turns to her in a natural movement of love precisely because she is its mother, not because she is simply source of nourishment or warmth or protection. It should be that way with us, so that when a prayer is readily answered as we had desired we might praise the Lord, and when a prayer appears to go unheard we again give thanks to God who works in often mysterious and hidden ways—simply for being a loving and merciful God. In other words we make sure not to mistake the blessings of creation for their creator. When it comes to our salvation we similarly ought to rejoice not that "the spirits are subject to us", even though they are subject to us in the name of Jesus, but rather be glad that this subjection is a sign of our share in Christ's victory over all sin, death, and demonic influences.

By realizing that our riches in Christ are pure gift, even if we are set back on our heels for a moment thinking in a worldly way—which emphasizes power and prestige (hence the apostles glee)—eventually we come to see the infinitely greater blessing of friendship with the God who desires to grant us such gifts more than we could ever wish for them. When we make this conversion, which can apply in many any situations in life, we can say with conviction the words that Paul spoke to the Galatians in today's second reading: "May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Gal 6:14).

Like a child who knows how to treasure its mother far beyond the life-giving gifts she provides, may we always turn to God with thankfulness in our hearts for the many gifts he showers upon us, but above all "because our names are written in heaven" through his gracious love.

[Father Edward Mazich, O.S.B., Shortened from http://www.saintvincentarchabbey.org/news_print?id=2838]

NEWS

SOCIAL GATHERING: Our monthly social gathering comes off on Sunday, July 3 after mass. We are all encouraged to bring along something to share with the community. We need some volunteers to help with setting-up for this at 12.30 so please let us know if you can help.

If you would like to be added to our email list please send your contact information to:

infoheidelberg@internationalcatholiccommunity.com