

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily
Sunday, October 2, 2022
27th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Cycle C

I remember as a kid when I would get upset, I used to say to my parents,

“I am not going to eat my vegetables.”

“I am not going to school today.”

“I am not going to breathe until I faint.”

As a kid, I imagined that such behavior would punish my parents, when in reality I am the one who would lose by such behavior.

I also remember a person who came to me and said, “Father, I’ve not been to church for almost 20 years now.” I asked him the reason why. He said, I was upset with the priest who was assigned in this parish many years ago. Because of that, I didn’t go to church anymore. I lost my faith. Then, what did you gain by doing that? I asked.

Actually, when we do such things, we are the ones who suffer. We suffer a loss of faith, a loss of God’s grace. We become the unprofitable servants that today’s gospel passage talks about. We are servants obliged to duty. Not doing our duty makes us unprofitable servants. The point of today’s gospel parable is this: Fulfilling our duty does not enrich God; it enriches us, it fulfills our life. When we do not perform our duty...for example,

When we do not practice our faith in our daily life,

When we do not establish a personal relationship with God,

When we do not share in the life and mission of the Church,

When we do not practice the spirituality of stewardship,

When we do not use our time, talents and resources according to God’s purposes...we are unprofitable servants!

I am not presenting an image of God as a strict, harsh and demanding taskmaster – like an unloving father.

Christianity is based on a service of love. A service of love enriches the loving servant.

- It makes the servant profitable.
- It is a service beyond duty or command.

Earl Meyer has this commentary on today's gospel passage:

"When we follow the commandments only out of duty, we fail to profit from our faith, we are then 'unprofitable' servants.

- The Christian life is a commitment.
- It is a disposition of the heart, an attitude of life, that goes beyond rules and regulations. (Earl Meyer)

One cannot legislate the essentials of Christian life: showing mercy and manifesting compassion; extending forgiveness and promoting reconciliation; practicing love – loving as Jesus loves.

Such a life is not just about being correct. It is more about caring, comforting, serving. Albert Schweitzer once spoke to a graduating class – saying:

"I do not know what your destiny will be."

"Some of you will perhaps occupy remarkable positions. Perhaps some of you will become famous by your pens, or as artists."

"But I know one thing: the only ones of you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve."

Those words are true. The unhappiness in our lives does not come from our lack of faith, but from our lack of service.

Yes, we have to pray: "Lord, increase our faith."

But we must also pray: "Lord, increase our service."

Serving the Lord and our neighbor is in itself a reward. It gives meaning to our life. It is not what we have done for God that counts, but what he does for us in his mercy.

Brothers and sisters, always remember, we are in God's hands.