

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily
Sunday, September 15, 2024
24th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Cycle B

“To be, or not to be: that is the question”. This is a classic line from Shakespeare.

I read somewhere that learning usually passes through three stages.

- In the beginning you learn the right answers.
- In the second stage you learn the right questions.
- **In the third and final stage you learn which questions are worth asking.**

It is also said, ***“Life is all about asking the right questions and giving the right answers.”***

The questions that we give so much attention and thinking determine, to a large extent, the way we live our lives. The questions we always ask have the power to control or dictate the direction we take in our lives. For example: The question that may be always on your mind is: “How can I earn more money?” If that is the question that is always on your mind, naturally your life revolves around money and material gains. Or the question that you are engrossed with may be: “How can I become popular and win the esteem of others?” If that is the question that is always on your mind naturally your life will be focused on fame and glory. Or the question that preoccupies you may be: “How can I have a more comfortable and convenient life?” If that is the question that is always on your mind naturally your life will be oriented towards pleasures.

So, honestly, what questions do you constantly think of? What issues or concerns do you usually entertain? What is the single most important question you have ever asked and continue to ask? It is important because, again, it has the power to lead you to a certain direction and orientation, affect the decisions and choices you make, influence the way you

live your life, and define your mission and destiny in life. The most important question you ask can change your life. Are you asking the right question and giving the right answer?

In today's gospel reading, Jesus asks an important question to his disciples: "Who do people say that I am?" Such a question is also addressed to each of us and must be paraphrased this way: "**Who is Jesus to me?**" This is a great question, the most important one. Why? Because this really is the defining question of life. Because how you answer this question will determine how you live your life.

Jesus is telling us who we must be. What Jesus does shows us is how we must act. What Jesus stands for should define our principles, values and standards. Shame on us, if we say that Jesus is the Christ, but our lives say something else –totally different from what we say.

If we really consider Jesus as "*the Christ, the Messiah,*" we cannot put him inside the cabinet and just take him out when it is convenient for us to do so. We cannot confine him in just one area of our life or restrict his influence on just one aspect of it.

We must allow him to be the Lord of our whole life – every aspect of it – not just our spiritual life, but also our social, political and economic life. We must devote every moment of our life to him – giving him all the glory and honor. We cannot give him just half of our heart, mind, and strength and the other half to our other concerns and preoccupations. We must give our whole selves to him. Our whole heart, mind and strength must be committed to actively sharing in the life and mission of Christ.

"Who do you say that I am?" "Who is Jesus to me?"

Do not answer this right off the top of your head. Look deep into your heart.

Is Jesus your Christ, your Messiah, your Savior, your Lord?

This is the question that will transform your life.