

- I won't keep you too long today since probably many, if not most, may have family and guests in for the holiday.
- But regardless of the occasion or event, we must always place God first in our lives.
- No doubt those 72 disciples that Jesus sent out to spread His Gospel had family, friends, jobs and plans as well—and yet they put them on hold when it came to following the will of Jesus—which to us should be the same as the command of God...for that really is what it is.
- What wonderful Christians and Catholics we would be if we would simply say sincerely to God: “Your wish is my command.”
- Why don't we do that? After all...if God's will is all-good and most beneficial for us and for others, why do we balk so much at following His commandments?
- Because the consequence of Original Sin...and its attendant selfishness, self-interest, greed, lust, hatred, etc. All of them leading us away from God...and thus are self-destructive.
- Because we all have struggles with one (or all) of the above, we may think: “I'm not worthy!” I have news for you: none of us are worthy.
- But God has a way of choosing the lowly and, by human standards, the least worthy for his service.
  - Of the two sons of Abraham, God chose the younger son Isaac for Abraham's spiritual inheritance.
  - Of the twin sons of Isaac, God chose the younger and weaker Jacob—later renamed Israel—to be the father of His chosen people.
  - He chose David—the youngest son of eight and the most unworthy of his family to be the greatest king of Israel... because, as in that story, God says: “...*the LORD sees not as*

*man sees; man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."* (1 Sam 16:7 RSV)

- Several of the prophets were lowly unknowns...herdsmen and woodcutters.
  - Mary was a peasant girl in a little town called Nazareth—a town of so little repute that the future apostle Nathanael asks: *"Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"* (John 1:46)
  - Peter, Andrew, James and John were simple fishermen. Matthew...a despised tax collector.
  - St. Paul had persecuted the Church violently.
  - And Jesus Himself—God—chose to be born in a stable...live as a common workman...and die on a cross as a criminal.
  - 
  - By our own ideas, we might be tempted to look at ourselves and say: "Lord, can't you do better than this?"
  - But God despises arrogance, and loves humility.
  - In the book of Proverbs we hear: *"Everyone who is arrogant is an abomination to the LORD; be assured, he will not go unpunished."* (Pro 16:5 RSV)
    - *"God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."* (Jam 4:6 RSV)
    - and...*"this is the man to whom I approve, he that is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word."* (Isa 66:2)
  - God loves and uses the humble to fulfill his plans.
  - After all...by worldly standards, Mother Teresa was nothing; but she influenced millions by reflecting Christ's love.
- 
- In our Gospel today, Jesus sends out 72 disciples to spread the word of His Good News.
  - Jesus was doing quite well by Himself. All we have to do is look at the thousands that were following Him when He fed the 5000.

- But Jesus—God—chooses to work through human instruments—not only through those disciples, not only through bishops and priests...but through all Christians. This is our mission AS Christians—to go forth and spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ... that God has come to forgive the sins of those who repent and accept Jesus Christ...and who seek to live as He taught.
- To those will belong that new Jerusalem of the first reading... where God will care for us more tenderly than a newborn child by his mother.
- 
- St. Paul writes to all the baptized when he wrote: “...*consider your call, brethren; not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth; but God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong...*” (1Co 1:25-29 RSV)
- You who have been baptized are the anointed disciples of Christ— anointed with water and the Holy Spirit...to be among the 70 who were given the gift of God to prophesy to the world.
- 
- So let us ask ourselves:
  - Am I being faithful to that privilege?
  - Do I live my life as the reflection of Christ that I am called to be?...obedience to God, generous, loving, forgiving...
  - Am I giving my life for others...or demanding that they conform and give their lives for me?

- 
- The sacraments we receive—particularly the Eucharist—are not simply for personal edification.
  - With the sacraments, God strengthens us and sends us out into the world... to preach to the world by word, but most of all by example and action...in our work, by modesty in dress, in our recreation, in our families, and in whatever circles we tend to run

in...rejecting the sinful things, and being liberal in charity and kindness.

- This is why one of the dismissals of the Mass is: “*Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your lives.*”
- Jesus calls his followers the lights to the world...the salt of the earth. This is how we glorify God.
- 
- And so...you are laborers for God’s harvest—the harvest of souls for Heaven...the greatest of privileges, and yet the greatest of responsibilities.
- We should realize that all the work and struggle that we do for the things of this world will be forgotten almost as soon as you are in the grave.
- But the work that we do for God will be remembered--and rewarded--forever...rewarded with God’s undying love. God, whom Jesus calls “*my Father and your Father.*”
- So, as Jesus tells us: “*Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life...*” (John 6:27 RSV)

Reading 1

[Is 66:10-14c](#)

Thus says the LORD:  
Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad because of her,  
all you who love her;  
exult, exult with her,  
all you who were mourning over her!  
Oh, that you may suck fully  
of the milk of her comfort,  
that you may nurse with delight  
at her abundant breasts!  
For thus says the LORD:  
Lo, I will spread prosperity over Jerusalem like a river,  
and the wealth of the nations like an overflowing torrent.  
As nurslings, you shall be carried in her arms,  
and fondled in her lap;  
as a mother comforts her child,  
so will I comfort you;  
in Jerusalem you shall find your comfort.

When you see this, your heart shall rejoice  
and your bodies flourish like the grass;  
the LORD's power shall be known to his servants.

[Ps 66:1-3, 4-5, 6-7, 16, 20](#)

Responsorial Psalm

R. (1) **Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.**  
Shout joyfully to God, all the earth,  
sing praise to the glory of his name;  
proclaim his glorious praise.  
Say to God, "How tremendous are your deeds!"  
R. **Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.**  
"Let all on earth worship and sing praise to you,  
sing praise to your name!"  
Come and see the works of God,  
his tremendous deeds among the children of Adam.  
R. **Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.**  
He has changed the sea into dry land;  
through the river they passed on foot;  
therefore let us rejoice in him.

He rules by his might forever.

**R. Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.**

Hear now, all you who fear God, while I declare  
what he has done for me.

Blessed be God who refused me not  
my prayer or his kindness!

**R. Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.**

[Gal 6:14-18](#)

Reading 2

Brothers and sisters:

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.

For neither does circumcision mean anything, nor does uncircumcision,  
but only a new creation.

Peace and mercy be to all who follow this rule  
and to the Israel of God.

From now on, let no one make troubles for me;  
for I bear the marks of Jesus on my body.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit,  
brothers and sisters. Amen.

[Lk 10:1-12, 17-20 or 10:1-9](#)

Gospel

At that time the Lord appointed seventy-two others  
whom he sent ahead of him in pairs  
to every town and place he intended to visit.

He said to them,

"The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few;  
so ask the master of the harvest  
to send out laborers for his harvest.

Go on your way;

behold, I am sending you like lambs among wolves.

Carry no money bag, no sack, no sandals;  
and greet no one along the way.

Into whatever house you enter, first say,  
'Peace to this household.'

If a peaceful person lives there,  
your peace will rest on him;

but if not, it will return to you.

Stay in the same house and eat and drink what is offered to you,

for the laborer deserves his payment.  
Do not move about from one house to another.  
Whatever town you enter and they welcome you,  
eat what is set before you,  
cure the sick in it and say to them,  
**'The kingdom of God is at hand for you.'**  
Whatever town you enter and they do not receive you,  
go out into the streets and say,  
'The dust of your town that clings to our feet,  
even that we shake off against you.'  
Yet know this: the kingdom of God is at hand.  
I tell you,  
it will be more tolerable for Sodom on that day than for that town."

The seventy-two returned rejoicing, and said,  
"Lord, even the demons are subject to us because of your name."  
**Jesus said, "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. Nevertheless, do not rejoice  
because the spirits are subject to you,  
but rejoice because your names are written in heaven."