

Reflection for the 13th Sunday of Ordinary Time

This Sunday the 13th Sunday of Ordinary Time we have a Gospel reading taken from the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 10 verses 37 thru 42. This reading gives a clear indication that Jesus is the Son of God and He is informing his Apostles of this truth. In the Magnificat missalette for the month of June, there is an article written by Bishop Robert Barron that is has the title *A Light Unto My Path*. In this article, which focuses on the gospel reading for the 13th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Bishop Barron focuses on how this reading from Matthew presents the divinity of Jesus. Bishop Barron also points out the some biblical commentators and theologians see the Synoptic Gospels presenting the human Christ, a teacher and miracle worker, but the Gospel on John presents the divinity of Christ.

The article by Bishop Barron about the readings for the 13th Sunday of Ordinary Time provides us as a people of faith an opportunity to more fully look into the Gospel readings and the message that the Gospels provide us. In trying to explain the message of a reading or a particular book in the Bible sometimes theologians focus on one part or aspect of the reading or the book and do not look at all the unique attributes of a particular reading. So often a biblical commentator or theologian is looking at things in a general and broad manner. Our Gospel reading this Sunday does provide us with an opportunity to more fully look at all four Gospels found in the New Testament and to reflect on the insight and message that they provide us.

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke are often referred to as the *Synoptic Gospels*, due to the fact that they have very similar content. The Gospel of Mark was written around 66 to 70 AD, the Gospel of Matthew was written around 85 to 90 AD, the Gospel of Luke was written around 85 to 90 AD and the Gospel of John was written around 90 to 110 AD. Traditionally the Synoptic Gospels have been seen more in the way of a biography on the life of Christ in this world, and the Gospel of John was seen in the light of embracing Christ in faith. Knowing that it is possible that the Gospel of John might have been written 44 years after the Gospel of Mark and the Gospels of Matthew and Luke could have been written within 15 years of the Gospel of Mark, it is understandable that the Gospel of John would have a different focus and purpose then the Synoptic Gospels. The early Church Father Clement of Alexandria stated that the Gospel of John is a “spiritual Gospel” because of its deep insight into the divinity of Jesus.

In the Gospel of Mark and Luke 21 miracles are recorded, in Matthew 22 and in the Gospel of John just 8. It is interesting to note that of the 8 miracles recorded in the Gospel of John 6 of them are particular to this Gospel, in the Matthew and Luke 3 are particular, and Mark only has 1. The Gospel of Luke contains 35 parables, Matthew has 15, Mark has 9 and John has 0. What we can draw from this information is the clearly Luke, Matthew and Mark have similar content and John is a unique Gospel compared to the other three. What we can also see is that the Gospel of Matthew tends to land in the middle when we look at the different attributes on each of the Gospels found in the New Testament.

Each one of the Gospels is a divinely inspired document, presenting Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Savior of the World. If we only read one of the 4 Gospels we would still have a balanced and accurate account of who Jesus Christ is. Today in our Gospel reading taken from the Gospel of Matthew we are presented with the fact that Jesus is not only human but is also divine, this is the dual nature of Jesus Christ. The Catechism of the Catholic Church in #458 states “The Word became flesh so that thus we might know God’s love: In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.” Due to the human nature of Jesus Christ we can easy relate to Him and know that He understands the challenges and trials that we face. But it is because of His divine nature, that we can have life through Him.