

*THIRTEENTH SUNDAY - A - JULY 2, 2017*

*"WHOEVER RECEIVES A PROPHET BECAUSE HE IS A PROPHET WILL RECEIVE A PROPHET'S REWARD..."*

*NOTICE IT IS ABOUT RECEIVING A PROPHET....*

*OF COURSE, TO RECEIVE A PROPHET - TO WELCOME A PROPHET IS TO WELCOME AN OUTCAST.....*

*WE ALSO HEAR THAT IT'S IMPORTANT TO WELCOME A RIGHTEOUS PERSON WHEN WE HEAR:*

*WHOEVER RECEIVES A RIGHTEOUS MAN BECAUSE HE IS A RIGHTEOUS MAN WILL RECEIVE A RIGHTEOUS MAN'S REWARD...*

*WE DO A LOT OF THAT HERE AT QAC, DON'T WE? AND WE DO IT WELL..*

*WE DID IT JUST YESTERDAY....*

*WELCOMING OVER 300 PEOPLE FOR THE MEMORIAL SERVICE OF TERRY LUPP....*

*THANKS SO MUCH TO EVERYONE FOR CONTRIBUTING TO THAT SUCCESS ESPECIALLY, TEESIE AND THE CHOIR....*

*MARTI QUAKENBUSH AND THE INCREDIBLE HOSPITALITY CREW....*

*WONDERFUL, WONDERFUL HOSPITALITY*

*THANK YOU*

*NOW BACK TO WELCOMING A PROPHET, LIKE THE WOMAN IN OUR FIRST READING WHO WELCOMED ELISHA, THE PROPHET...*

*YES, THE PROPHET IS TYPICALLY AN OUTCAST.....*

*PROPHETS ARE USUALLY NOT WELL RECEIVED*

*PERHAPS WE DON'T THINK OF THE PROPHETS IN HEBREW SCRIPTURES*

**AS OUTCASTS - BUT WE ARE LIVING MORE THAN 2,000 YEARS AFTER THEM**

**PROPHETS ARE OUTCAST WHEN IT COMES TO THEIR OWN GENERATION...**

**E.G. MAHATAMA GANDHI, MARTIN LUTHER KING, MORE RECENTLY,**

**OSCAR ROMERO NELSON MANDELA AND OUR OWN DOROTHY STANG....**

**AS WE KNOW, THEY WERE NOT WELL RECEIVED BY THE POWERS THAT BE**

**PROPHETS ARE NOT WELL RECEIVED BY THE POWERS THAT BE....**

**I LIKE TO THINK THAT WE TRY TO BE OPEN TO THE OUTCAST, THE**

**PROPHETIC, AMONG US,**

**E.G. WE WELCOMED THE MUSLIM FAMILY BACK IN THE WINTER...**

**NOTICE, THE OTHER EXAMPLE IN OUR GOSPEL...**

**WHOEVER GIVES ONLY A CUP OF COLD WATER TO ONE OF THESE LITTLE**

**ONES TO DRINK --- WILL SURELY NOT LOSE HIS REWARD**

**ANOTHER OUTCAST REALLY IN THAT ANCIENT SOCIETY -**

**CERTAINLY A NOBODY, SOMEONE EASILY DISREGARDED, EASILY CAST**

**OFF WITH NO CONSEQUENCES...A CHILD WAS A NOBODY**

**AND A CUP OF COLD WATER IN THAT DESERT LIKE PLACE AND CLIMATE**

**- WOULD DEFINITELY BE A EXTREMELY HIGHLY VALUED GIFT TO A AN**

**EXTREMELY LOWLY REGARDED INDIVIDUAL**

**BUT THAT WILL NOT GO WITHOUT BEING NOTICED AND REWARDED IN A**

**SPECIAL MANNER....**

**YESTERDAY, IN OUR MEMORIAL SERVICE WE NOTED HOW GIFTED TERRY**

**LUPP WAS IN WELCOMING EVERYONE, BUT MOST ESPECIALLY CHILDREN**

**SHE HAS MOST CERTAINLY BEEN REWARDED FOR GIVING CUPS OF COLD**

**WATER TO CHILDREN THROUGHOUT HER LIFE....**

**THE GOSPEL BASICALLY IS SAYING TO US -**

**THE MORE INCONSEQUENTIAL , THE LESS HIGHLY REGARDED, THE**

**MORE MARGINAL , THE PERSON YOU RECEIVE IS -**

**THE MORE YOU CAN EXPECT TO BE REWARDED...**

**AND DON'T ASSUME THE REWARD WILL SOMEHOW BE IN THE NEXT**

**LIFE..NO WE ARE TALKING ABOUT BEING REWARDED NOW**

**THE REWARD IS NOW - JUST LIKE IN THE STORY OF ELISHA, THE**

**PROPHET....**

**ELISHA REWARDS HIS GRACIOUS HOSTESS WITH WHAT SHE MOST**

**DESIRES: "THIS TIME NEXT YEAR YOU WILL BE FONDLING A BABY SON"**

**AND ISN'T THAT TRUE IN OUR OWN LIVES....I KNOW IT'S TRUE IN MY OWN**

**E.G. I TOLD SOMEONE JUST THE OTHER DAY - MY SIX AND A HALF YEARS AS THE DIRECTOR OF OUR COMMUNITY AT MERCY SIENA WAS THE MOST REWARDING, THE MOST GROWTHFUL OF MY ENTIRE LIFE....**

**WORKING WITH INDIVIDUALS IN A SKILLED NURSING FACILITY, AND IN ASSISTED LIVING**

**THOSE INDIVIDUALS ARE USUALLY CONSIDERED AMONG THE MOST NEGLECTED, THE MOST IGNORED, THE MOST INCONSEQUENTIAL**

**SO, HOW WAS IT THEN THOSE YEARS WERE THE MOST REWARDING, THE MOST GROWTHFUL OF MY ENTIRE LIFE?**

**(OF COURSE, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF MY INVOLVEMENT HERE AT QAC)**

**E.G. EVERY YEAR IN THE SUMMER AT UD A NUMBER OF STUDENTS GIVE UP THEIR SUMMER GO INTO APPLACHIA COUNTRY IN KENTUCKY AND VOLUNTEER AND WORK WITH THE POOREST PEOPLE THERE AND SO MANY RETURN SAYING THAT THE EXPERIENCE HAS COMPLETELY TRANSFORMED THEM?**

***I COULD GO ON BUT YOU GET THE IDEA -***

***IT'S COUNTER INTUITIVE - LIKE MUCH OF OUR GOSPEL***

***SO, WHO ARE THE PROPHETS TRYING TO GET INTO YOUR LIFE...???***

***PERHAPS A NEIGHBOR WHO IS A TRUMP SUPPORTER?***

***PERHAPS A TRANSGENDER INDIVIDUAL?***

***WHO ARE THE "LITTLE ONES" IN YOUR LIFE WHO ARE IN NEED OF A CUP OF COLD WATER IN THE DESERT OF THEIR LIVES?***

***AS RICHARD ROHR SAYS, "I CAN'T HATE THE PERSON ON WELFARE WHEN I REALIZE THAT I'M ON GOD'S WELFARE"***

***IT WILL NOT BE EASY - ESPECIALLY AT FIRST***

***BUT THE REWARD WILL BE GREAT!***

***THE REWARD WILL BE A TRANSFORMATION OF YOUR MIND INTO THE MIND OF CHRIST!***

***THE REWARD WILL BE A TRANSFORMATION OF YOUR HEART INTO THE HEART OF CHRIST!***

***WE WILL EXPERIENCE A HEALING, A FREEING OF OUR SPIRIT....***

***FORTUNATELY, TODAY WE HAVE A RATHER NEW MEMBER OF***

***OUR COMMUNITY WHO IS WILLING TO SHARE WITH US HER***

***REFLECTIONS ON OUR COMMUNITY'S OPENNESS, OUR COMMUNITY'S WELCOMING SPIRIT AND WHAT IT HAS MEANT TO HER ....***

***SO LET ME WELCOME AND INTRODUCE LAURIE STOBER WHO WILL***

***SHARE HER COMMENTS ON OUR READINGS TODAY ....***