

THIRTIETH SUNDAY - A - OCTOBER 29, 2017

I SUPPOSE WE ALL VALUE BEING BRIEF AND BEING CONCISE RIGHT?.

THERE IS A FAMOUS STORY ABOUT THE ESTEEMED RABBI HILLEL....

A PAGAN MAN CHALLENGED HIM TO TEACH THE ENTIRE TORAH WHILE

HE STOOD ON ONE FOOT....FIRST FIVE BOOKS OF HEBREW SCRIPTURES

AS THE MAN LIFTED HIS FOOT THE RABBI SAID:

"THAT WHICH IS HATEFUL TO YOU, DO NOT DO TO YOUR FELLOW. THAT

IS THE WHOLE OF THE TORAH. THE REST IS COMMENTARY. GO AND

LEARN"

MAYBE FOR HOMILIES WE SHOULD HAVE THE CONGREGATION STAND

ON ONE FOOT AND REQUIRE THE HOMILIST TO COMPLETE HIS HOMILY

BEFORE THE FIRST PERSON DROPS THE OTHER SHOE - AS IT WERE"

OR BETTER YET - REQUIRE THE HOMILIST TO STAND ON ONE FOOT AND

FINISH THE HOMILY BEFORE HE PUTS DOWN THE OTHER FOOT....

IT IS A WAY OF SAYING WE VALUE BREVITY - CONCISENESS

GET TO THE POINT - PRESENT YOUR POINT.....

WE CAN MANAGE THAT - DON'T OVERWHELM US...

JESUS' OPPONENT - BEING A GOOD LAWYER IN TODAY'S GOSPEL

CHALLENGES HIM ALSO TO SUMMARIZE THE TORAH BY POINTING OUT

THE GREATEST LAW OF THEM ALL -

THE ONE WHICH IS THE FOUNDATION FOR ALL THE OTHERS

JESUS DOES JUST THAT:

"YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD, YOUR GOD, WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.

AND THEN ADDS A SECOND, WHICH IS LIKE IT:

"YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF"

***THOSE TWO COMMANDMENTS ARE MADE SPECIFIC AND CONCRETE IN
OUR FIRST READING FROM EXODUS.....***

THUS SAYS THE LORD:

***"YOU SHALL NOT MOLEST OR OPPRESS AN ALIEN - FOR YOU WERE ONCE
ALIENS YOURSELVES IN THE LAND OF EGYPT.***

YOU SHALL NOT WRONG ANY WIDOW OR ORPHAN....."

***WE HAVE SEVERAL ISSUES IN THIS COUNTRY THAT WE ARE FACING AT
THIS TIME THAT ARE DIRECTLY RELATED TO OUR READINGS TODAY
ABOUT LOVING OUR NEIGHBOR, ABOUT NOT MOLESTING OR OPPRESSING
AN ALIEN***

***E.G. DACA - THE DREAM ACT - OR DEFERRED ACTION FOR CHILDHOOD
ARRIVALS - IS IN LIMBO RIGHT NOW....***

***THE STATUS OF THOSE YOUNG PEOPLE MUST BE MADE REGULAR BY
MARCH 5, 2018 OR THEY CAN BE DEPORTED.....***

***THE US CATHOLIC CHURCH IS DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE MANY
YEARS OF FAILURE IN CONGRESS TO ADDRESS THE PLIGHT OF
IMMIGRANTS WHO WERE BROUGHT TO THE UNITED STATES WHEN THEY
WERE YOUNG AND WHO HAVE NO PATHWAY TO REGULARIZE THEIR
STATUS....***

***THE US BISHOPS ARE URGING CONGRESS TO PROVIDE A PATH TO
PERMANENT RESIDENCE FOR THESE YOUNG IMMIGRANTS BY PASSING***

THE DREAM ACT OR SIMILAR LEGISLATION

TO THAT END THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI IS JOINING WITH THE OTHER ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESES IN THE STATE OF OHIO IN A CAMPAIGN TO GENERATED 10,000 LETTERS TO OUR CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATES ACROSS THE STATE....

WHY THIS NUMBER? SINCE IT BEGAN THERE HAVE BEEN NEARLY 10,000 TOTAL APPLICATIONS APPROVED FOR DACA, INCLUDING RENEWALS WE ARE APPEALING TO CONGRESS TO LIVE UP TO ITS RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROTECT THESE YOUNG PEOPLE AS A STEP TOWARD FIXING OUR BROKEN IMMIGRATION SYSTEM.

THESE LETTERS WILL BE COLLECTED BETWEEN NOW AND DECEMBER 18TH, INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS DAY.

THIS IS ONE OF THE MANY ADVANTAGES TO OUR MEMBERSHIP IN A MUCH LARGER COMMUNITY.....

IN THIS EFFORT WE JOIN WITH OTHERS AND HAVE A MUCH BETTER CHANCE OF PROTECTING THE VERY VULNERABLE....

WE WILL NEED TO MAKE SURE THAT YOU HAVE THE INFORMATION TO WRITE A LETTER IF YOU WOULD LIKE IF YOU DON'T ALREADY...

THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO JOIN A TWO YEAR CAMPAIGN THAT POPE FRANCIS INAUGURATED IN SEPTEMBER CALLED "SHARE THE JOURNEY" WHOSE PURPOSE IS TO RAISE OUR AWARENESS OF THE PLIGHT OF IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD...

AS HE SAID IN HIS HOMILY, "EVERY STRANGER WHO KNOCKS ON OUR

*DOOR IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR AN ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS CHRIST,
WHO IDENTIFIES WITH THE WELCOMED AND REJECTED STRANGERS OF
EVERY AGE.....*

*SO WE AS A COUNTRY ARE FACING CRITICAL QUESTIONS IN THIS REGARD
RIGHT NOW:*

*WILL WE ALLOW CONGRESS TO CUT THE SLOTS FOR LEGAL IMMIGRANTS
AND REFUGEES 50% NEXT YEAR, AS THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION HAS
REQUESTED?*

*WILL THE US CONGRESS FINALLY ADVANCE THE DREAM ACT - WHICH IT
HAS CONSIDERED EVERY YEAR SINCE 2001 - BUT NEVER PASSED - BUT IT
WOULD ALLOW YOUNG IMMIGRANTS TO ADVANCE THEIR EDUCATIONAL
AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES WHILE MOVING OUT FROM BEHIND
THE SHADOWS?*

*IS THERE SOMETHING OUR COMMUNITY CAN DO TO BECOME MORE
WELCOMING TO THOSE WHO ARE NEW TO THE US, TO THE MIAMI
VALLEY?*

*CAN WE INVITE IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES INTO OUR LIVES IN SOME
WAY?*

*NO DOUBT THE MESSAGE TO "LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF"
FLIES IN THE FACE OF THE "AMERICA FIRST" MOVEMENT BUT WE HAVE
TO REFLECT SERIOUSLY ABOUT OUR CHRISTIAN BELIEFS AND THEIR
IMPLICATIONS FOR US - AS AMERICANS TODAY.*

DO WE WANT TO GO BACKWARDS - OR DO WE WANT TO GO FORWARD?

SHIFTING GEARS SOMEWHAT.....

THIS WEEKEND - THE LAST SUNDAY OF OCTOBER - HAS LONG BEEN CALLED REFORMATION SUNDAY BY OUR PROTESTANT BROTHERS AND SISTERS...

THIS WEEKEND THROUGHOUT THE CHRISTIAN WORLD WE ARE COMMEMORATING THE 500 TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REFORMATION - WHEN IN OCTOBER 1517 MARTIN LUTHER, AN AUGUSTINIAN MONK DISSEMINATED 95 THESES TO VARIOUS CHURCH BISHOPS AND OFFICIALS IN WITTENBERG, GERMANY ASKING FOR A DEBATE ON CERTAIN ISSUES WITHIN THE CHURCH THAT HE FELT WERE ABUSES, CONTRARY TO THE GOSPEL....

OF COURSE, THAT BOLD PROCLAMATION SET IN MOTION A SERIES OF EVENTS THAT WOULD EVENTUALLY BECOME THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION.

SO WE REMEMBER THEM IN A SPECIAL WAY TODAY - HOPEFULLY OUR APPRECIATION FOR ONE ANOTHER WILL GROW AND OUR UNITY SO THAT WE CAN ONCE AGAIN BE OF THE COMMANDMENT:

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF

OBVIOUSLY, THIS MESSAGE IS SORELY NEEDED IN OUR CULTURE TODAY WHEN WE ARE SO POLARIZED - SO EXTREME - EVEN FANATICAL THAT WE LOSE THESE BASIC VALUES OF RESPECT AND CARE FOR EACH OTHER....

THE ABILITY TO LISTEN EMPATHICALLY TO ONE ANOTHER...

THIS MESSAGE IS FOR ALL OF US

ESPECIALLY - YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF"

SO WE COME TOGETHER AS HE ASKED US TO DO -

AND WE RECALL AND DO WHAT HE ASKED US TO DO....

THIS IS HIS FINAL GIFT OF LOVE TO US.....

SO WE ASK HIM TO SHARE HIS SPIRIT WITH US IN A SPECIAL WAY THIS

MORNING - THE SPIRIT OF THE RISEN CHRIST.....

A SPIRIT WHICH WILL ENABLE US TO CARE FOR THE STRANGER, THE

IMMIGRANT, THE REFUGEE, THE WIDOW AND THE ORPHAN -

TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBOR AS OURSELF.