

TWENTY - FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME SEPT. 13, 020.

*As you well know, we like to “name” our **generations**. We tend to group members of society by the years in which they were born and grew up. And we give them names such as Baby Boomers, my generation and Millennials. One group in particular is often lauded as having displayed the best this country has to offer. We call them **The Greatest Generation**. These were the women and men who fought the **second world war**. It’s really hard for us in this time and place to imagine just how all-consuming that conflict was, how it dominated every aspect of daily life in this country for four long years. Sacrifices were made by all -overseas and back home. And for this we call them the “greatest”.*

*We also call them “greatest” because of **what they did after the war**. They came home and worked tirelessly to build an America **better than the one that came before**. A big part had to do with the era in which these men and women were born. These were the people who **grew up during the Great Depression in the 1930s**. And the difficulties of that era, shaped them as adults. And one thing they were committed to was making sure that the generation that would come after them... their sons and daughters... **Would have it much better than they had it**.*

Nearly all parents want their kids to have it better than they had it. They want them to have a great marriage and loyal friends and good health and all sorts of other things they might not have had themselves.

But what about the **other people** in our lives? What about our neighbors? Our co-worker? Do we honestly want for them the same things we **want for ourselves**, or do we want something somewhat less for them? ...pause

What about when it comes to God?

“Could anyone nourish anger against another and expect healing from the Lord?”

This might be the most difficult one of all...wanting the same things **from God** that we want **others to receive from God**. We mess up and what do we want? **Forgiveness**. Others mess up and we **hold a grudge**. The way I want God to treat me, and the way we want God to treat **Others**. Almost never the same thing. But they certainly **should be**.

Our readings today drive home this point clearly, especially the brutal story we heard in the Gospel passage from Matthew. A servant receives mercy and compassion from his master regarding a debt he owed. That same servant then refuses to show mercy to someone who owes him money. This is really rough stuff. And yet it reveals a **deep spiritual truth**.

If we want God’s blessings, we need to be a true blessing to others.... caring for them, helping them when they are in need, loving them regardless if they return our love, being present to them as our God is present to us. These things are all interconnected, they don’t exist in some sort of isolation.

Wouldn’t it be wonderful if decades from now historians started calling this generation the “greatest” also, not because of our accomplishments, not because of what we built or what we invented.... but because we **gladly share with others** everything God provides for us and we **loved the most**.