

Theme: "What are we doing for others?"

Today's second Reading and the Gospel give us the antidote to our self-centeredness, to that impulse of I, Me and Mine!

In Paul's Letter to the Philippians he advises us to simply "Focus our attention on Jesus." He says:

"Have in you the same attitude that is also in Jesus Christ. What was that attitude? Jesus emptied himself. He was totally obedient to the Father. Already at the age of twelve when Mary, after three days of searching found him in the temple, asked him why he stayed behind, he replied, "Did you not know I must be about my Father's business?" Then again at the well in Samaria when the disciples asked if he had eaten, he replied, "My Food is to do that which is pleasing to the Father." And finally, on the Cross he prayed, "Father, the work you gave me is finished,"

Paul really throws a challenge to us when he says, "**Humbly regard others as more important than yourselves**, each looking out not for his own interest, but also for those of others."

In the Gospel, Jesus gives us a story about two brothers. One ultimately chooses to empty himself of what he wants and does the will of his Father. The other brother, though giving lip service that is pleasing to hear, nevertheless chooses self-interest over what his father wants. This parable is really an attack on the Chief Priests and Elders. Jesus is telling them they are like the second brother - all lip service but with hearts far from doing what is pleasing to God, whereas the prostitutes and tax collectors repent of doing their own thing and seek to please the Father.

Where this hits home for you and me is which son are, we like, especially when we pray the Lord's prayer and say, "They will be done." The question is, **do we really put what God wants before what we want?**

God calls all of us to work in His Vineyard. It is a call to service. It is a call to look to others interests. it is a call to go beyond talk and become involved in action for the transformation of the world.

As you celebrate your 50th Anniversary you are nearing retirement or perhaps already are collecting Social Security. However, by now I hope we have all learned the wisdom that our real security is not in amusing ourselves 7/24. Rather we experience **Security** and real joy in life if we put Jesus, first, others, second and **yourself**, third. That spells **J-O-Y!**

Some of the happiest people I know are retired folks who simply do volunteer work at the hospital, a Nursing Home or any number of Service Organizations. Life is most persistent and urgent, the question we ask ourselves is, **what are we doing for others?**

There is a story that sums it up well. Two little boys came home from school one afternoon, very hungry. They yelled at their Mom for something to eat. She placed two pieces of cake on the table in front of them, one twice the size of the other. She said, "Now boys, Jesus would give his brother the bigger piece. After a moment's hesitation the older boy said to his brother, "You be Jesus." That is the lesson of today's Scripture, the rest of your life, **YOU BE JESUS!**