

Fourteenth Sunday of the Year – July 5, 2020

Zechariah 9: 9-10 – Romans 8: 9, 11-13 – Matthew 11: 25-30

One saying of Jesus that is recorded by the Gospel writers that is more powerful than all the others, and that is so needed now as a meditation on our relationship with God, is the one we heard today: “Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest.” This is especially so in the midst of what we continue to experience during this year.

Although it is the Gospel that we hear these comforting words, similar thoughts are found in the other passage from Scripture that were read today. In the vision of the prophet, Zechariah, the Lord is described as one who saves rather than conquers. Our God is with us to bring peace, and doing so meekly and humbly. Saint Paul reminded us that the burden of being human, of living according to the “flesh” has been overcome. It is no longer a burden for us because of our being united with Jesus Christ who was raised from the dead. Further, we have then been empowered by Christ’s handing over the Spirit to us. The Spirit is the abiding presence of God with us. Our faith in Jesus Christ has a direct effect on us and on our living our daily lives.

Even if we can say in our minds that this is the God in whom we believe, in the midst of the struggles of living with unexpected challenges we often become discouraged, disappointed. This is especially the case when we suffer the various results of being human such as illness, weakness, dependency. All the

more do we need to listen to these words and find comfort whatever our circumstances. We may have family and friends who are close and on whom we can rely. Or we may feel lonely and abandoned because of loss or death. Nevertheless, what our Lord and God wants us to know is that God, our Creator, above all, loves us. God loves us not only in our goodness because, if this were so, Jesus would not come to redeem mankind. God loves us in our weakness, in our frailty and in our feelings of despair. In Jesus Christ God acted for us out of the love our God has for us. That is our faith.

This is also the source of our greatest comfort. More than anything else in this life, whether we admit it or not, we want to know that we are loved. It is this knowledge that allows life to become far less of a burden. The love of God for us is the basic message of Christ and the source of his teaching.

If we hear Christ's call to live in ways that are gentle, meek and humble, nothing will be so imposing, nothing will be so over-bearing, that it will hopelessly weigh us down and cause despair.

We need to listen to these words over and over again. They are to guide us and to motivate us all in our daily living. These words announce to us the truth of the love of our good and gracious God.