

The Lightness of Love Sunday July 6 Proper 9

Jesus has not come to take away our burdens.

He knows burdens are a human problem, part of the human condition. Jesus invites us to look at the things we feel weary about and burdened by. Jesus offers an invitation to all who are weary and carrying a heavy burden to come to him to receive the gift of rest. The first thing Jesus calls us to is to be in relationship with Him. Jesus is NOT asking us to first fix things in our life, get things in order and then come to him. He is inviting us to come just as we are and that means with our burdens. Before we can share the good news with others we need to let him shoulder our burdens with us.

Sometimes under the weight of our burdens we can feel like our back is breaking, sometimes we scream or sob in anger and pain. I imagine that right now each of you has thought of a burden you are carrying. So here is the thing, it is when the burden brings us to our knees that our hearing improves. In the silence between the scream or sob on our knees we can hear Him say: *“Come to me. Come to me. There is no burden of yours too disagreeable for me to carry with you.”*

When we let go of shouldering our burden alone we can rest. When we rest we rejoice, we celebrate, we really feel Joyful. Where does that joy come from but from Him. Entering into a relationship with him His joy is in us and our joy makes him complete.

The story doesn't end here! This is the groundwork of grace to examine our burdens in light of ***who Jesus is for us and let Jesus into our life and rejoice.***

The second part of this passage is about what he asks of us.

Jesus wants us to learn how to rest from him. To rest is to be humble enough to surrender our way of doing things and yield to His way, which may often mean for us personally that the path is unclear and unfamiliar. His way will be one where he will ask us to bear one another's burdens, where no burden is too disagreeable for us to shoulder with him on behalf of our sisters and brothers. Gentle enough to live non-violently in thought, word and deed. To live a life of resistance that flows from our baptismal vow to renounce the evil powers of this world which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God.

His Rest requires that we put on His Yoke. That is exactly what we promise we will do by our baptismal vows. Today and for centuries we have heard that his yoke is easy. It is important that we hear the other meanings of the word **easy**: My yoke is GOODNESS! My yoke is MERCIFUL! My yoke is LOVING! My yoke is MORALLY GOOD! In his mercy he shoulders our burden with us, in his goodness, he bears our burdens, in his love, he upholds us. This is what it means to be morally good. Being yoked to him is being yoked to goodness, mercy and love to His moral goodness and in joy to go and do the same.

So how light is his burden? The gospel word also means insignificant. His yoke of goodness, mercy, love is an insignificant load to carry. St. Paul reminds us there no restriction no limit on how kind, loving, merciful, or good a person can be. 1 Cor 13 makes it clear that love Jesus speaks of isn't a warm fuzzy feeling it is a way of Being. If we believe that in Jesus we live and move and have our being then how we live determines the heaviness or lightness, the weightiness or insignificance of the burden we carry with Him. **It is up to each of us to choose the lightness of love.**