

14th Sunday of the Year A July 3, 2011 – Fr. Gerald Haemmerle

For the past 16 weeks we have been in a very special time of the Church year. It began with the First Sunday of Lent at the beginning of March, and ended on the last Sunday of June with the feast of Corpus Christi. We need special times in the Church year to really focus on the mysteries of our faith, just like we need special occasions throughout the year to celebrate life, with birthdays and anniversaries, weddings and baptisms, and occasionally a funeral. But I for one am most grateful to be returning to ordinary time. We simply cannot focus all the time or celebrate all the time.

I think our gospel today is a perfect one to help us ease into the ordinary Sundays of the year. In our gospel today Jesus said, "I give praise to you, Father, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned, you have revealed them to little ones." What is it that God has revealed to the little ones? Why is it that Jesus often praised children? I think it is that God has given little ones a simplicity, a lack of ego, a sense of trust, a feeling of joy.

This Saturday morning I went to the Sugarcreek Metro Park to do my walk. I eventually went up around the lakes, and there was a young boy, maybe 7 or 8, fishing with his father. It was a perfect picture of ordinary time and how we should enjoy it. The boy was with his best friend, his father, who was taking the time to be with him. He was doing something he loved to do, fish, although I did not see them catch any. That wasn't important. As we get older we seldom take the time to go fishing. We feel we have to work too many hours to provide for family, we need to get ahead and stay ahead, we need status and other adult things.

That little boy was having fun because he trusted in his father. He knew that if he fell into the lake, his father would save him, if he got lost his father would find him, and at the end of the day his father would feed him and drive him safely home. As we get older we trust only in ourselves. And as we get older, we labor and are burdened by many things. Our jobs are insecure. Our health isn't what it once was. Our parents are aging or have passed away. I could go on and on.

In our gospel Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you will find rest for yourselves." We must learn to turn to Jesus, to trust in him, and with him to trust in the Father. He even uses the word "yoke". Take my "yoke" for my yoke is easy. What is a yoke? It is a harness, usually made of wood, that binds two animals together, so that two can do what one could not have done alone. If we allow ourselves to be joined to Jesus, then we can do what we could never do by ourselves. With Jesus we can deal with the labors and burdens that come our way.

And so my advice for all of you is to go fishing this summer. I use that as a metaphor. This summer slow down, spend with people you love, enjoy life a little more, trust in others, but especially trust in God. If we do, our burdens will become light.