

Fourteenth Sunday in ordinary time

The Husband came home from the psychiatrist looking very worried. "What's the problem?" his wife asked. "The doctor told me I could have no worry and perfect peace of mind if I take a pill every day for the rest of my life," he explained. "So what? Lots of people have to take a pill every day their whole lives," she replied. "I know," said George, "but the doctor gave me only four pills!"

Dear Friends,

We all invariably carry some kind of burdens in our life everyday either physically, psychologically, mentally or spiritually. No one in the world that can say, I believe, they have no burdens in their life. It depends on how do we handle it?

I ask you today to reflect with me regarding a couple of questions that arises in my mind as we celebrate the independence of the nation. Who can lighten up our burdens? How do we want to lighten up our burdens? Each country or nation in the world had a struggling past history of slavery. To lighten up the burden of the slavery of the nation, our forefathers with some leadership freed us from that burden. Some of us have the family burden to carry. May be not so much here, because both are working and sharing the burdens. It is not so in some culture like me where the men work and women stay at home and take care of the children.

When we have some sickness, we go to the doctors to get well from the sickness or extend the durability of our sickness when it is not curable. They alleviate the pain and the burdens to certain level. If we keep on searching the question, we are struck somewhere at one point except the answer that is God.

Today's scripture especially the Gospel gives a simple and straightforward invitation to all of us. "Come to me all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest." This is an invitation from Jesus to all of us today and every day. Mathew quotes this passage directly to the Jewish Christians who were all tired of hearing 613 rules taught by the Pharisees, who do not lift a finger to help people carry them out. In contrast Jesus' yoke, his teachings are simple and straightforward and he accompanies the followers as they put them into practice. He is gentle and compassionate.

In my experience of thirteen years of priesthood, with my family, it is Jesus, who can lighten my burden. I have had so many moments of life where I felt there is somebody accompanying me all the time. That's why I look at him as my friend. To be honest, I am not a holy man. I know that myself. But when I need someone to cling on, it is him. I have cried out before him many times. He only knows that. I create a personal bond or relation

with him. It is not I who choose, rather he chose me. I remember my mother sharing that she dreamt that I would be a school teacher. I ended up being a priest. Just go to him or come to him.

How can he lighten up the burden? He can, by accompanying with us. It is done in so many ways. In most of the cases, it is through fellow human beings by love and sharing. We hear so many stories on this. I can share so many where I felt I see Jesus in them. He loves us and he accompanies us every day.

What is it that we need to do? Accept the invitation and reach out to him. It is not only us but our friends and family to reach out to him as well. Take upon the yoke of Jesus and he will lighten up our burdens and walk with us.

Let us also be grateful to the nation where we live whether it is good or bad politically.