

Twenty First Sunday in Ordinary Time

Three men are traveling on a ship, when they are accosted by the Devil. The Devil proposes that if each man drops something into the sea and he cannot find it, he will be that man's slave. If the Devil does find it, however, he will eat that man up. The first man drops a pure, clear diamond, and immediately gets eaten. The second drops an expensive watch, trying to impress the Devil, and gets eaten. The third man fills a bottle with water and pours it into the sea yelling, "You think I'm a fool? Try finding that!"

During today's times we become so familiar with online shopping, doing most of the things online. There is a survey in all shopping or anything you do. They want to know your experience with them in getting what you wanted. It is done in all the fields.

Today's readings especially the Gospel tells us to do a survey on ourselves to know the experience of God in our life. Jesus wanted to know how people have evaluated him? Or how did people understand him? What do they say about him?

Each one of us have different answers for these questions. It doesn't need to be the same. Though we encounter the same person, it is always a different experience for all of us. God's creation, it is the beauty of human nature.

Jesus had been doing lot of miracles, healings, preaching and so on. He personally called the disciples and formed them to be fairly to do the will of the father. Now Jesus would like to know their observation. First, he asked about the general opinions of the people.

The disciples tried to explain what they had from people and some high role models in the scripture who would represent God's presence among them. The Gospel writer Mathew helps us to realize that Jesus is somebody to very closer to God.

Now the second question asked is more personally to each of the disciples and to all of us. Who do you say that I am? It is more of personal question, which need to be answered personally. Jesus asked this personal question to the apostles because they were with him fully, very closely related with him, and stayed with him for long time. Jesus thought that they would have observed and learned a lot from him. That's why he asked personal question.

When you have a personal question like this, it needs more in-depth response which essentially requires more commitment. Now Peter represents the group saying, "you are the Messiah". Then Jesus gave all authority over the earth. It is not only to Peter but also for the whole group of apostles. They all recognized him as Messiah. Because in different places in the bible, the other apostles expressed the same. We can see in John 1: 49

Nathanael answered. John 20:28 Thomas said, My Lord, MY God. John 6:69. These answers made him satisfied.

For me if I am asked the same question: My answer would not only be that He is the "Messiah, the Son of the living God," but also that He is a friend of mine, an older brother, who is the Son of God. He is my friend in the sense that I can confide in Him with my darkest secrets and not be laughed at. He laughs at my joke even if it is terrible and laughable; He knows about me but still likes me; He is the person in a hundred, whom I can trust all the times; He likes, loves and absolutely cares about me. He is the one who appreciates and encourages me and corrects with love when I am wrong, and at the most who gave his life for me.

He gave him authority. The same thing we read in the first reading that Israel had been given the power than other people.

What about you? If you are asked who is Jesus for you or what is your personal preview of Jesus?