

FATHER MARK SCHULTE HOMILY
Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)
July 11, 2021
“It Never Gets Old”

God’s plan of salvation can be expressed in a number of ways. But today’s readings give us a kind of capsulated glimpse into this plan. Paul tells the Ephesians that they form part of a privileged, predestined people that have been chosen by God since even before the world began to be a part of His plan of salvation (Eph 1:3-14). Christ is at the center of this plan of the Father. That through the blood of Christ they, the Ephesians, have been redeemed and their sins forgiven.

We understand through the fall of Adam and his sin that all of humanity became estranged from God. It was always part of God’s plan of salvation to restore man and his creation back into his good graces, his friendship. Paul tells the Ephesians and hence all who hear and read his words that if they believe in faith this message of Good News that God will bestow his Holy Spirit upon them and through this gift of his Holy Spirit, they will become his children once again (CCC 397-406).

Through the prophets of the Old Testament, God began calling a people back to him. But in time this calling will encompass not only the Israelites, but all people of the world (Zech 2:14-17). In the Gospel Jesus begins this process by sending out his Apostles “two by two”, first to the lost children of Israel, then later the Apostle Paul will begin taking the message of salvation to the Gentiles, people of every nation (Mk 6:13).

And so, we can see in these three readings we are given a kind of summary description of God’s plan of salvation in Christ:

- First through his prophets to his people Israel (Am 7:12-15).
- And then by Jesus Christ who sends out his Apostles two by two.
- And then the entire process is explained by Paul to the Ephesians.
- And finally, the church continues this evangelization process until Christ’s second coming.

Peter said: “what we await is a new heaven and a new earth, in which all righteousness dwells” (2 Pt 3:13). This is what God’s plan of salvation is working toward, a new heaven and a new earth (Is 65:17) (Rev 21:1).

We live in a world that has its share of uncertainties and challenges. Some of which affect us in our daily lives. Therefore, Paul’s words to the Ephesians should be good news to us as well. We are those predestined chosen people by God. To us has been revealed the mystery of God’s plan of salvation. If we accept it in faith, he will bestow his gift of the Holy Spirit upon each of us as a sign that we are now his children as well. We have a place in His kingdom. We have been restored back to Him and will live with Him eternally in heaven, provided we remain faithful to Him.

The plan Paul described 2,000 years ago to the Ephesians is now our plan as well. Listen to the Gospel. Believe in Jesus Christ by living a holy life and then God will bestow his Holy Spirit upon you and eternal life as well.

The Apostle Peter said to the people: “Be ready to give (others) an explanation of this hope of ours in Christ” (1 Pt 3:15). This is our task now. The mystery of our salvation in Jesus Christ has been given to us. Now we must make it our commitment to bring it to others.

The greatest blessing bestowed on us by God is letting us be called his children because only his children will experience salvation.

You may say: “Father we have heard all this before”!!

I am sure that I have expressed all of this to you before – perhaps in a little different fashion. But the story of our salvation in Christ is like a good movie. We always enjoy hearing it again and again. It never loses its value. The story never gets old.