

Sunday 29th August 2021

Trinity 13

Filling Up On God's Love

Our Gospel reading today is Mark 7. 1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to Saint Mark
Glory to you, O Lord.

Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, 'Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?' He said to them, 'Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, "This people honours me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines." You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.'

Then he called the crowd again and said to them, 'Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.' For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

🙄 In today's Gospel reading, we hear the Pharisees and Jesus talking about the idea that whatever fills you is what then comes out of you.

The story starts out with the Pharisees, who are among the religious leaders in Jesus's time and place, scolding Jesus because his disciples are eating unwashed food. The Pharisees are concerned that if a person eats a lot of unwashed and unclean food, they will be filled up with unclean food and then only unclean actions, like lying and cheating, will come out of that person.

Jesus disagrees with part of what the Pharisees are saying. He says that people lie and cheat and are selfish towards others, not because of what they eat, but because their hearts are "far from me".

It is true that filling our bodies with healthy food helps our bodies to be healthier, but it is also true that filling our hearts and minds with God's Holy Spirit and love helps our hearts to be loving and our minds to be just.

It is this understanding that Jesus is teaching the Pharisees. He is saying our hearts are meant to be filled up with and overflow with God's holy spirit and perfect love. Then, because our hearts are overflowing with God's love, there's no room in us for the fear that leads to selfishness and unkind words and actions. When we're overflowing with God's perfect love, that perfect love is what we have to share with others.

🙏 A prayer for this week:

Dear God,
 Thank you for Jesus,
 who teaches us
 how to fill up our hearts with your love
 and then share your love with others.
 Amen.

D	E	S	E	H	S	I	D	O	O	UNCLEAN	HANDS	WASHING	ELDERS
R	O	Z	P	N	E	Z	G	O	R	MARKET	CUPS	POTS	BRONZE
B	R	O	N	Z	T	N	H	F	E	RESPECT	FOOD	HYPOCRITES	ELBOW
S	T	A	F	R	I	C	U	P	S				
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R	E	W	S	E	C	B	A	E	E				
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