

Homily Outline for the 22nd Sunday of the Year - Cycle A
Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception
August 30, 2020

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- I. "Do not conform yourselves to this age, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind" (Romans 12:2).
 - A. St. Paul wrote this to the Christians in Rome almost 2,000 years ago.
 1. We might think this does not apply to us today, but consider:
 - a. Our culture promotes abortion, contraception, same-sex marriage, sexual activity outside of marriage, cohabitation, greed, thirst for money and power, lack of concern for the poor, and at the end of life: euthanasia.
 - b. Our "age" is not so different from the world of the 1st century Roman empire.
 2. St. Paul's words are intended for us today as much as for the first Christians in Rome, calling for a "renewal of the mind," i.e., a new way of thinking.
 - B. It's hard to go against the tide.
- II. We see this in the first reading from the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah (Jer 20:7-9).
 - A. The context is that the Kingdom of Judah is collapsing because the people have forgotten the ways of God, turning instead to pagan gods and idolatry.
 - B. So the prophet Jeremiah says if you want to save your kingdom, reform your lives and come back to the ways of God.
 1. People react negatively to this message.
 2. The temptation is to be silent when the cultural forces are so strong.
 3. Life would be a lot easier if I would just be quiet about God!
 4. But the word of God is burning in his heart, and he cannot remain silent.

5. He continues to call people to the ways of God, even though it cost him dearly in his own personal life.
- III. In the Gospel (Mt 16:21-27), Jesus talks about how he would have to suffer, and die, and rise again on the third day.
- A. Peter must not have been listening closely, because he apparently did not hear the last part about rising on the third day.
 1. He objects that he will not let this happen, obviously focused only on the first two parts of what Jesus was saying about his suffering and death.
 2. This provokes a strong reaction in Jesus, who calls Peter "Satan" and an obstacle to His plan of salvation.
 - B. Jesus calls Peter and His disciples and all of us to a new way of thinking, i.e., rather than thinking the way other people think, He calls us to think the way God thinks.
- IV. Going back to St. Paul, he says, "urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship."
- A. He is talking about "sacrifice," a beautiful word which comes from two Latin words, *sacer*, which means "holy," and *facere*, which means "to make."
 1. So *sacer* + *facere*, sacrifice, means to make holy.
 2. When you sacrifice, that's how you become holy.
 - B. Jesus sacrificed Himself for our salvation.
 1. He calls us to sacrifice in our lives for the greater good as well.
 2. For example, if you want a happy, healthy and holy family, spouses have to make sacrifices for each other, and parents need to make sacrifices for their children.
 3. They give of themselves to make their family holy, and that is a very beautiful thing!
- V. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is a re-presentation of the Sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

- A. Jesus calls each one of us to be part of that sacrifice.
- B. As St. Paul said, "Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship."
- C. In this Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, our spiritual worship, Jesus invites us to join our bodies to His, as He shares His Real Presence with us, so that by this Sacrifice, we might be brought to the joy and eternal reward of His kingdom in heaven.

VI. May God give us this grace. Amen.