Sermon: The Fifth Sunday of Pentecost

Speaker: Deacon Gail Kerrtland

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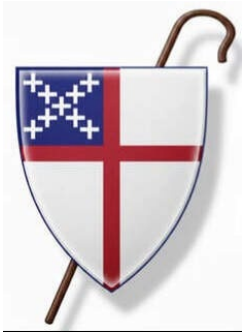


At first glance this Gospel lesson seems very un-Jesus like. “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.”

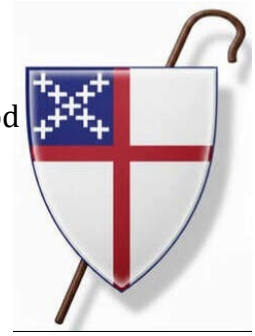
Former Presiding Bishop Michael Curry is famous for saying, “If it’s not about love, it’s not about God.”

Yet Jesus is quoted as saying,

For I have come to set a man against his father,
and a daughter against her mother,
and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;
and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household.

Bishop Curry invited those present at the marriage ceremony of Prince Harry and Maegan Markle, and the millions who would hear his message online, to imagine: “Imagine our homes and families where love is the way. Imagine business and commerce where love is the way. Imagine this tired old world where love is the way. When love is the way — unselfish, sacrificial, redemptive. When love is the way, then no child will go to bed hungry in this world ever again. When love is the way, we will let justice roll down like a mighty stream and righteousness like an ever-flowing brook. When love is the way, poverty will become history. When love is the way, the earth will be a sanctuary.”

It reminds me of the opening talk from a Cursillo weekend. Cursillo is Spanish for short course. Have any of you heard of Cursillo? It is a renewal weekend comprised of 14 talks on living a Christisn life. The first one delivered is on Ideal. One talk on Ideal asked people to think about the checkbook and where the bulk of their money goes, suggesting that where our money goes is what we hold as most important to us. Another person, a computer geek, talked about the importance of a Mother Board in a thinly veiled reference to God. Each of the opening talks is about holding an ideal up as a goal to pattern your life on and that perhaps our earthly goals are falling short of helping us to become the persons we were created to be.



As the Cursillo weekend progresses the talks become more focused on God

and how we can become better disciples:

loving God

loving our neighbors

and loving ourselves.

It's all about Love, just as Bp. Curry says. The Cursillo weekend is all about that love and the talks gradually build, covering topics about having an ideal, the role of the laity in the church today, what it means to live a life of Grace, what is the role of the church, the obstacles to a life of Grace, the sacraments, the Christian life, the presence of the Holy Spirit, Christian action, leadership, study, the environments of where we live and work, and, finally, our fourth day.

The Fourth Day is the season of Pentecost. If Jesus arose on the third day, what happened on the fourth day is the birthday of the church, the empowerment of the Disciples, and the Call of each one of us to continue Christ's work: spreading the love of God, clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, visiting those in prison, and caring for the sick.

While Jesus says, "Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it."

What Jesus is really saying is there can only be one ideal and it has to be God. Each of us is living in that fourth day, that day after the Resurrection and the only way to live it is to make the commitment, to pick up the cross, to shoulder the heavy burden of living life and doing it as a Christian, a Disciple of Christ.

One of the 10 Commandments is to honor your father and your mother, which is especially good to remember today - being Fathers' Day - but the first Commandment is to love God, and that's every day.