

TRINITY NEWS

Pentecost X Finding Completeness in the Completing Person

People: I have talked several times recently with Romualdas “Rom” Vildzius. Rom is the Lithuanian Consul. His first language was Lithuanian but his English is very clear. His beloved mother was gifted in languages and she passed something of it to him. Rom said that when he goes to church it makes him “feel complete”. He says also, “The good that comes to me I accept, and the not-so-good I forgive.” He has a magnificent portrait of his military father in his apartment. He speaks of his father’s huge compassion and forgiveness. That too has passed to him. He has lived here half a lifetime. We should remember such people while there is time. I think that he would want no accolades other than being a true son of his mother and father and his country.

Christ: The completeness of Christ as a person is evident in the distance between him and sin. The New Testament speaks of him being “without sin” and “apart from sin” or “knew no sin”. Some rather thin attempts have been made to pair him up with Mary Magdalene, but that may just have been a warm relationship. Have you had some of those “warm friendships” and that’s all they were? When they go further and we sell them as only ‘friendships’ we are being false to ourselves, let alone others, including the person concerned.

Jesus links sin and evil together. Without a concept of sin we cannot really see the God that Jesus called Father. There is no room for God when we do not think that “we have all sinned and **fallen short of the glory of God**” (Romans 3:23). The last words are a wonderful description of the meaning of sin. Jesus confesses in the Garden of Gethsemane that his will might run contrary to the will of God. “Not my will but yours be done” echoes the thoughts of his own will and feelings. In that garden he prostrated himself several times and it does not require much of an active imagination to see him prostrating himself when he accepted the will of God as a mark of his own destiny. But Jesus never calls himself the first of sinners like Paul. Like Job before him Jesus refused to accept

the verdict of the religious people about his standing with God. He did not relent on that point. He felt inadequate before God our Father, but he never asks him directly for forgiveness of his own sins. He falters but he never fails when it comes to doing the will of God. We struggle with all of this, but our identity is caught up with his identity.

Ourselves: I would like to be a complete person, we may say. I would like to be at peace, but as a Christian how can I match the inner heart of the prophet from Nazareth? He the inner model of the Church's life and its outer expressions have to conform with his life, if not in detail, then in the essentials. That is, never lowering the self-status of another person; not diminishing my own dignity and worth as a person or allowing anyone else to do it. Wherever Jesus goes there was the Spirit of God, and I have to show the Spirit of Jesus in my life as a Christian or my words are empty and my deeds without substance. But when all is said and done, we cannot be complete without being loved by another person at depth, without reserve and in complete trust. When that is broken, we are broken. Somehow, our completeness is also found in being loved by Christ. "Salvation" would be an empty word without Christ renewing our hearts and minds through his love and making us complete.

Paul's prayer for his people is our prayer for ourselves: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God - what is good and acceptable and complete" (Romans 12:2). Amen.

Bishop Arthur Jones

THIS WEEK:

Wednesday.

- Bible study, 10:00am.
- Group Discussion, 7:00pm, Parish Office

Thursday.

- Midweek Eucharist, 10:00am, Chapel.
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NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

Deuteronomy 8:1-10
Psalm 34
Ephesians 4:30-5:2
John 6:37-51