

## The 13th Sunday in Ordinary Time

By Fr. Greg Ames

Canvas, clay, metal, marble, wood. An artist can take any one of those ordinary things, and create something—often a thing of beauty. I guess that really is the definition of an artist: someone who can transform things—ordinary things—and create a message. That is what Corine Borgnet must have been thinking when she decided that the material for her sculpture was not going to be wood or plaster—but POST-IT notes. But not just any POST-IT notes. She wanted to use notes that already had a message or reminder on it. Messages like: “Call your mother, “ “Pick up dry cleaning,” or 609-466-0300. Corine put up a sign near where she lived asking people to drop off their used notes. She collected 6000 and created a modern day Tower of Babel, based on the theme of confusion and overload. She simply called it “Messages” and it had the price tag of \$11,000. It is not just the end product that pleased Corine. It was process it took to create it: *My tower has really become the opposite of the biblical story. It’s inclusive and it fostered communication. People on my street who had never talked to me before wanted to know what was going on with all the notes:*

### Think of yourself as living for God

I don’t know about you, but my life is filled with information overload. Every day there are messages that compete for my attention. It can all be very confusing. So I am thinking about this homily at my desk, surrounded by messages and notes to myself, and I am looking at the POST-IT notes, writing three points here and there, and then I found myself writing again and again those words from Paul: **Think of yourself as living for God.** And I realized it is a message to be written and lived with our hearts:

**THINK OF YOURSELF AS LIVING FOR GOD**  
Paul did not want his friend in Rome to walk blindly and unconsciously through life. He wanted them to think—to always be aware—that their baptism called them to look at life differently. Baptism for Paul had nothing to do with babies and a christening gown and a party afterward. It was all about the way a person lived his or her life. When

you stop and think, I am a follower of Christ, you may different choices, you make connections with others, you see Christ at work in the world.

### THINK OF YOURSELF AS LIVING FOR GOD

It is very easy to look at others’ lives and figure out what they should do. He should choose this; why did she do that; what is wrong with them. It is more challenging to look at yourself. The words of Jesus are very challenging, almost harsh, in today’s Gospel. Yet the words get at the heart of what it means to be a Christian: I have to choose it each day. I cannot hide in the back, go along for the ride, sneak in through a side door. How different would your life look if each day you got up and reflected: where will Christ ask me to follow today?

### THINK OF YOURSELF AS LIVING FOR GOD

What does it mean to live for God? Is it being like Mother Theresa; giving away all your assets; praying all the time? It really isn’t. It is about being conscious of the simple, gracious things you can do that help others feel secure and loved. The woman who simple provided hospitality for Elisha found the blessing returned to her. Jesus insists that is the small stuff, the little things that you do that you insist are really nothing. Those are the works of a disciple.

At the end of every Mass I always say, “As God has blessed us, may we always be a blessing for one another.” It is not just a nice way to end the Mass. It is a reminder that to live for God is to be aware of how you can be a blessing in the life of others. When you live in that awareness you begin to connect with others in a new way; you lose some of the confusion that fills our lives. You realize no one needs you or wants you to do great things; just be a blessing it is as simple as giving a cup of cold water to someone else. It is living each day with words not on a POST-It note, but in your heart: **THINK OF YOURSELF AS LIVING FOR GOD.**

## READINGS OF THE WEEK

2 Kings 4:8-16    Romans 6:3-11    Matthew 10:37-42

June 29, 2014

# 靈 修 生 活

## 常 年 期 第 十 三 主 日

阿 爾 貝、范 諾 怡 樞 機 主 教

這個主日的福音向我們講述上主的苛求和祂的慷慨。上主是苛刻的，祂索要一切，但同時祂也是最慷慨的，祂給予豐沛的賞報。

耶穌，最溫和、謙卑，卻陳述了一個非常強烈的苛求：“誰愛自己的父母超過我，不配是我的；誰愛自己的兒女超過我，不配是我的”。祂怎麼可以提出如此苛求呢？祂這樣做是為了愛，因為祂願意將自己贈送給我們，而實現這個贈送的條件是，在我們內找到空間，找到樂於接受的心。

耶穌並不像我們其他的朋友們一樣，祂是天主，祂有權利被我們全心、全力、全靈的去愛。我們應該如此的愛祂，以真正的接納祂。誰將耶穌看做一般的朋友，是不能真正的接納祂的。因此祂需要提出如此強烈的要求：要愛祂，超過所有其他的人。耶穌願意人愛祂，像愛天主那樣，而且與天主一起被愛。

耶穌也希望每一個人背起各自的十字架，跟隨祂：“誰不背起自己的十字架，跟隨我，不配是我的”。背起自己的十字架是找到真正生命的條件。耶穌的愛要求苛刻，但是也是最真實的，它滿盈每一個人的心。

然後耶穌講了一句相對立的話：“誰獲得自己的生命，必會喪失生命；誰為了我的緣故，喪失了自己的生命，必要獲得生命。”耶穌希望我們為了祂的緣故失去我們自己的生命。

第二篇讀經解釋耶穌的這句話，因為談到洗禮有如與祂同死在祂的受難內。保祿強調說：“我們借著洗禮已經歸於死亡與祂同葬了”。但是這種死亡是新生命的泉源：“…為的是，耶穌怎樣因天父的光榮從死者中復活了，我們也怎樣在新生活中度生”；“如果我們與祂同死，相信我們也會與祂同生”；“你們也要這樣看自己是死於罪惡，但是在耶穌基督內活於天主。”所有這一切都與耶穌這句話相聯繫：“誰因為我失去自己的生命，必將獲得生命”。

這個洗禮的奧跡應該在我們的平常日子裏生活出來。我們應該不斷死於罪惡，為了與基督，在基督內，為天主而生活。我們也應該接受徹底的失去生命，比如殉道。即使我們不處身在像殉道這樣特殊情況中，我們應該在徹底擯棄自我主義的意義下喪失自己的生命。我們不應該尋找我們自己的幸福，而要謀求取悅於耶穌，承行耶穌的意旨，那是愛的意願，與自我主義完全相反。誰在擯棄自我主義中喪失了自己的生命，他將會在耶穌的愛內，以及與耶穌相愛中，找到新生命。

耶穌在談到接納他人這件事時，向我們展示天主的慷慨。祂對使徒們說：“誰接納你們，就是接納我，也就是接納派遣我的那一位”。如果我們接納耶穌所派遣的人，那麼，我們所接納的不只是耶穌，而是天主。

## 本 週 讀 經

二 零 一 四 年 六 月 廿 九 日

列下 4:8-16; 羅 6:3-11; 瑪 19:37-42