

Homily. 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time. Year. C. 20/21 August 2022.

A quick look around you at the faces of those who come to Mass in our Parish community tells you that we're much more than just a local Church which many Churches are today. In fact we're even more than a national Church, something that a number of faiths and traditions have become.

Taking the Word of God seriously from our earliest days means that we've always reached out to people of all nations, races and cultures, reflected now here amongst us. God wants a gathering in of the nations of every language, an home for people who have never before heard of God nor had the opportunity to see God's glory. Moreover, as Isaiah prophesied, some of them will become Priests, and Levite servants and leaders in God's newly born family of faith.

In the gospel Jesus foretold of people coming from East and West, from North and South to take their places at the feast in God's Kingdom wherein the last would become first, and the first end up last. After the resurrection and Pentecost events, the Apostles quickly set out on this mission, bringing the good news to any and all who would listen and accept the Word and the Spirit into their lives. This work is what makes us into the God's Church, for a Church without mission is no Church of God, no family of faith in the Lord as God wishes and wills.

It's this outreaching missionary quality that makes us Catholic, a universal and world wide Church at the service of all who desire the Good-News of life in the Lord along with a better world and way of relating based on the values of truth and life, holiness and grace, justice, love and peace. It's

easy to be disheartened by the struggles of faith and religion in our days, which is in large part a Western phenomenon. What we have to do is be Catholic keeping the entire picture in view. This tells us a different story.

Looking with Catholic eyes we'll see a lot evidence of our faith changing lives and improving cultures across the globe. Thinking with deeply Catholic minds we'll understand that our reach and influence extends beyond this place, our place, beyond our shores even, reaching out across Asia, the Pacific, India and Africa, into depths of Siberia and the back streets of China and the Middle East. If we skate over this reality, this truth, then we're in grave danger of forgetting what it is to be Catholic.

Instead, remembering our universality, which the Word asks us to do this weekend, has the power of the Spirit in it, correcting our vision and reviving our hope. It has the grace and power to renew our energy to go out to all the world and tell the Good-News so that we can be in our own little place what our Eucharist means and celebrates; a foretaste of the one family of God and the promise of the coming Kingdom as God wills it to be.