

CONNECT! SUNDAY REFLECTION

29th Sunday in Ordinary Time | For Sunday, October 17, 2021

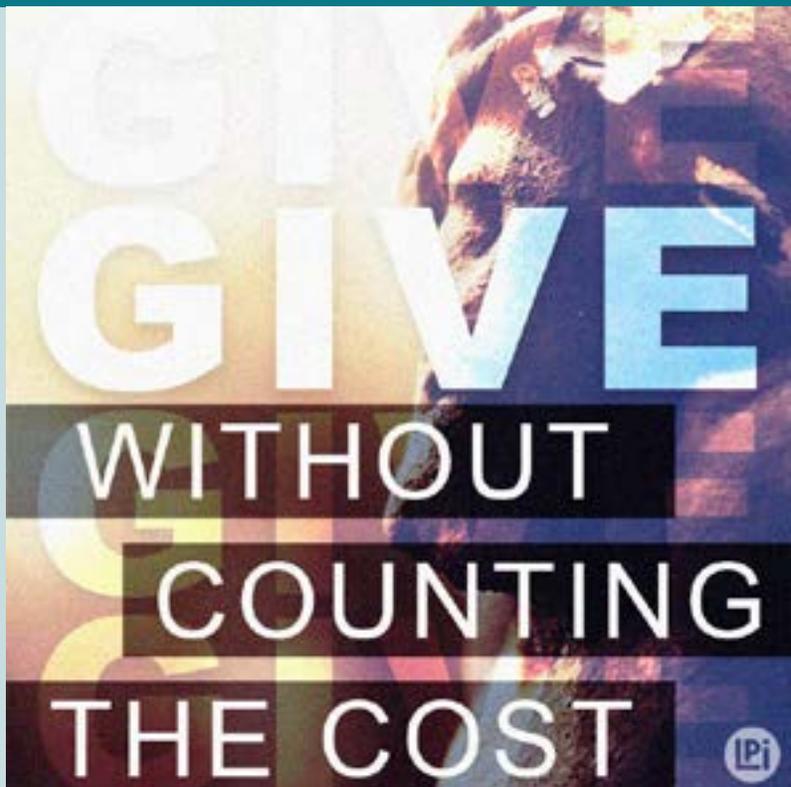
The Love We Are Called To

Written by Douglas Sousa

Isaiah 53:10-11

Hebrews 4:14-16

Mark 10:35-45 or 10:42-45



Jesus gave of himself in service to others. If we are to follow him, we must do the same.

The Eucharist is at the center of our faith lives. At Mass, we recall how Jesus humbled himself to enter into the muck of our world. Along with the bread and wine, we offer ourselves together with Jesus as a living sacrifice to the Father. We pledge that we will give of ourselves in service to the needy, the lonely, and the desperate so that the blessings of eternal life may be extended throughout the world. When we come to Mass, we are not bystanders or spectators. Rather our lives are at stake. We are proclaiming that Christ has died to save us and that we are willing to sacrifice ourselves in service to others.

Jesus makes this very clear to his disciples in [today's gospel reading](#). Though he was the most powerful man to ever walk the earth, Christ did not become human to dominate others. He came to seek out the sick, the suffering, and the sinners. He came not only to instruct and heal us, but he suffered the cruelest death imaginable to open up heaven to those who would believe. Jesus was not in it for the glory. And anyone who follows him must be willing to live as he lived. To be like our master, we must make ourselves the slaves of others.

As members of a community of faith, we can relate to the bickering that went on among the disciples. We all love our church and many of us give long hours of our free time to support it. Many of us are generous when it comes time to give to special collections or help out with fundraisers. However, it happens more often than we would like to admit that generous people get overlooked and feel slighted. We can feel bitter that others get the recognition we believe we deserve. We can resent that we are giving so much and others are giving so little. Or we can get so frustrated and offended by the pettiness and gossiping of others that we want to give up altogether.

While it is natural to want to be recognized for our work, it is not what the follower of Jesus is called to seek. All the great saints prayed that they would be overlooked and taken for granted even as they spent long hours in service of others. What they wanted more than anything was to be recognized by God for their work. So, they continued on even when they were made fun of because they wanted to be like Jesus who gave without counting the cost and who did everything not for the glory but out of pure love for others. Each of us who calls Jesus “Lord” must do the same.

At every Mass, we gather to recall the sacrifice that Jesus made to save us. Are we willing to give of ourselves for others? Are we willing to go without so that we can give more generously to the needy? Are we willing to risk injury or even death to protect the helpless? Are we willing to take on the thankless jobs no one else wants out of pure love for Jesus? Are we willing to go without being recognized because we set our hearts on the reward that only God can give? Above all, can we do all this with a spirit of joy and thankfulness because we are blessed to be able to know, love and serve our Lord?

— Douglas Sousa

PRAYER

O Jesus, present in the Sacrament of the Altar,
Teach all nations to serve you with a willing heart,
Knowing that to serve God is to reign.
May your Sacrament, O Jesu,
Be light to the mind,
Strength to the will,
Joy to the heart.
May it be the support for the weak,
The comfort for the suffering,
The wayfaring bread of salvation for the dying,
And, for all, the pledge of future glory. Amen

St. Pope John XXIII