

13th Sun OT – Luke 9:51-62

"Lord, do you want us to nuke them?"

Jesus turned and rebuked them, and they journeyed to another village.

Calling down fire from heaven to consume them, sounds like the solution to Sodom and Gamora. But Jesus only rebukes them and they continue on. The passages have Jesus rebuking a lot. ***Rebuking*** is a form of teaching used by rabbi that makes the person rethink what he is saying but meant to put them on the offensive and bypass a confrontational response. We don't really know what Jesus said to them but we do know what he said in the rest of the passages.

Today's passages could also be fit for Vocation Sundays, and they can, but I believe they are meant to encourage us to be committed to our calling at a deeper level, not just a superficial non-committal level. I often reminded my candidates in Africa for Marianist religious life, that it is not so much important why you entered religious life but ***why do you stay?***

That also applies to those who want to follow Jesus. "I will follow you wherever you go," someone said to Jesus, but he responded to him,

"...even the Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head." He is reminding the person that to follow Jesus will mean hardships, sometimes even no place to sleep at night. Are you sure you are ready to follow me?

To the next person Jesus ***rebuked*** was the man who wanted to go and bury his father, "Let the dead bury the dead." If the man had went back to his family to bury his father, they may have forced him to rightfully take his father's place and forget this crazy preacher. Jesus must have seen something in him worthy to encourage his desire to proclaim the gospel message. "You go and proclaim the Kingdom of God!"

To the third man, Jesus ***rebuked*** him because he wanted to say goodbye to his family first. "The one who sets a hand to the plow and looks to what was left behind is not fit for the kingdom of God." Now that is strong! On the surface the scene is similar to our reading from first book of Kings with Elijah calling the future prophet Elisha. But Elisha's response was immediate. He slaughtered his oxen and then set off to follow him. The other difference is that Elijah chose Elisha because he was prompted by the Lord.

The Lord calls us in today's gospel to follow him in a deeper commitment and hopefully we respond. This is serious business! How we respond depends on how seriously we take the Lord's calling and our commitment to him. In light of today's gospel, we are even attentive how the Lord might **rebuke** us for not being even more committed to his way. Even as a Marianist priest I may opt out and choose a more comfortable ministry to serve him and forget Saint Francis de Sales Parish, but then I am not allowing his mother, Mary, to speak to me what is expected from a Marianist priest.

Jesus may even **rebuke** us, as in his stark response to the man who wanted to bury his father first. Jesus even rebuked his mother, but gently, to her request, "They have no wine." He tells her, "What is that to you and me?" Mary doesn't take offense, but simply tells the steward, "Do whatever he tells you."

One of the "Five Characteristics of a Marianist Parish," is that it is **Marian**. We believe that she will show us the way, especially of faith, poverty of spirit and attentiveness to the Lord, by following her example. Mary remained committed all the way to the foot of the cross. This is

emphasized especially in John's gospel. We stay committed even when the end seems uncertain and even lost!

We try to reflect to those around us Mary's warmth of welcome of God and to others. We allow Mary to form us. She knew how to respond to her son, even after his rebuke! She is the one who pondered God's action in her life, but knew when the time came to act, "Do whatever he tells you," but still leaving the final decision in God's hands.

Our hope is to mention these characteristics throughout this summer to explain more deeper what they mean so that you can better put them to practice in your lives. This is what makes us a Marianist Parish and more.