



Homily for  
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME  
30/31 January, 2016

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**Fr. Dwayne's homily follows....**

- I. Protests outside of Planned Parenthood began in the city of Dubuque on Aug. 21, 2008. Members of Dubuque County Right to Life were committed to standing outside every hour that Planned Parenthood was open. There were over 200 volunteers and energy ran high: there was a lot of enthusiasm for this endeavor. But then reality began to settle in: how long will we have to do this? Will we have enough volunteers? Can we really cover every hour? There were moments of commitment and recommitment to this project which has lasted years.
- II. Such is the nature of commitment: there is the initial commitment – with high energy and enthusiasm – and then there can be many times of continuing commitment.

Our scripture readings today show us both Jeremiah and Jesus at the beginning of their missions. We hear of Jeremiah's call: God had dedicated him to be a prophet even before he was born. But he would face many challenges, many people would be against him.

And the gospel reading for today picks up where it left off from last Sunday: Jesus is in his hometown. He's the popular local boy who's made good and become well known in other places: now he's back home and all excited to have him back. But it doesn't last long when the nature of his mission is revealed: namely, that God's message is not only for them, but for all people – even foreigners and strangers! Hearing this challenging message they turn against him and want to hurl him off a cliff.

Both Jeremiah and Jesus began to face the reality of their mission – that isn't going to be easy. Does one give it up and walk away – or does one commit ever more firmly to the project at hand?

III. Think of your own commitments. Isn't this true for you? Isn't there high energy and enthusiasm at the beginning – and then the reality of what this really entails begins to settle in.

We begin those commitments with honest, true commitment. We really do intend to be committed: whether that means to marriage, to priesthood, to friendship, to service projects, to commitments in the community, to standing up for right, but unpopular causes – like standing up for life.

Then we begin to see more clearly the details – of energy drains away, of how enthusiasm wanes. So we find ourselves recommitting ever more deeply, over over again.

IV. This is true love.

St. Paul says love is the greatest of gifts. Paul details the challenges of genuine love: kindness, gentleness, humble, patient, forbearing, forgiving, persevering, seeking the truth.... Love, to love as did Jesus, is self-emptying and is to be the central theme of any disciple of Jesus.

We apply that theme to each of our vocations, to friends, to our family, to work situations, to neighbors, to community....

Love – genuine Christian love – is a commitment we make over and over again – to our friendships, our marriage, priesthood – our whole way of life as a disciple of Jesus.

V. We know that isn't easy, but we also know it is possible, and really what is necessary, as we live day in and day out with the challenges that come our way. We certainly won't like the drain in energy upon our strength, but, with the confidence bestowed by faith we know we can, and will, persevere to the end.

This is the lesson which Jeremiah and Jesus have taught us.

VI. The Eucharist we celebrate now unites us to Jesus and empowers us to loving commitment in all we do.