



Homily for
THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
01/02 October, 2016

Fr. Dwayne's homily follows....

27th Sunday – C - 2016
October 2, 2016
Holy Spirit (SH/HT/HG)

Habakkuk 1:2-3; 2:2-4
II Tim 1:6-8, 13-14
Lk 17:5-10

I. Quick! What is Holy Spirit Parish's Mission Statement? Surely everyone has this memorized...it must be on the tip of your tongue! Maybe you recite every day! Before leaving Mass today, every single one of us will have committed to memory Holy Spirit Parish's Mission Statement...

No, it's not the one normally printed in the bulletin, as simple as that is...our mission statement comes to us directly from Jesus and it is this: "Make Disciples." That's it – Make Disciples. Can you remember that?! Make Disciples. It is the mission statement of the entire world-wide Church.

II. So, are we doing it? What evidence is there that we are "making" disciples? What would you point to? In what ways is Holy Spirit Parish "making disciples?"

In the pews this week is an envelope with a brochure detailing some of the ways we have tried to advance the mission of the parish this past year. These include:

- expanding the strategic plan to 2020
 - our sacramental statistics for the year, including 14 participants in RCIA
 - what I am most proud of is our commitment to practicing the Corporal Works of Mercy
- Are any of these indicators we have made disciples of Jesus?

As he writes to Timothy. St. Paul reminds him "to *stir into flame* the gift of

God” that was given to him. St. Paul is the seasoned missionary, now in prison for his preaching of the gospel and he writes to the young Timothy encouraging him in his pastoral role in the community. St. Paul tells him not to be timid, but to be courageous and confident in proclaiming the message of Christ.

These are words addressed to us as well: stir into flame the gift of God, the gift of faith.

This admonition begins with us first – with those of us who regularly participate in the life of the parish. How has your participation in the life of this parish helped you to grow as a disciple?

- have you ever come to a Mass here which was truly meaningful and prayerful?
- have you ever heard a homily here which gave you new insight and helped you to deepen your faith?
- has your participation in a parish mission, a class, a video series, a prayer group, a CEW, any faith formation offering **helped you** to grow in your relationship with Christ?
- has your participation in fund raising events, the parish picnic or other social events helped you to connect a little more with other members of the community? Do you *feel* a sense of community?

If you can respond yes to any of these, then the mission to “make disciples” is effective for you. If you have to say no, then the mission to “make disciples” is not yet coming to fruition in you.

III. On the one hand, we – who are here all the time - are the beneficiaries of the mission to “make disciples.”

And on the other hand, **how do you and I make it happen for others?** That’s our job – to “make” disciples – to evangelize.

- does my active participation in Mass support and help others to pray?
- have I been welcoming and hospitable to guests and visitors – or parishioners I just don’t know?
- in what ways have I shared my time and talent with others?
- is my commitment to my parish demonstrated in the way I support my parish financially?
- have I helped to make projects, activities, classes, etc. happen?
- in what ways have I shared faith with others?

In other words, am I actively engaged in moving the mission “to make disciples”

happen here at Holy Spirit Parish?

- IV. Jesus said, “Make disciples.” In other words, help other people to connect with Jesus and have a personal relationship with him. Help other people to know the life saving message of Jesus. This is the essence of what we are to be about as a parish. This is the core of parish life. As I said – that’s our job. *Everything* we do should support the essential mission, “Make disciples.”
- V. Our annual reflection on how we are supporting our parish financially is a key way to support the advancement of the parish mission. It is only one piece of a larger picture, but it is an essential element of the whole picture. We begin that process today.

In the pews today is an envelope with a brochure summarizing where we have been and some of the goals we hope to accomplish. Included also is a pledge form. Please carefully read the brochure. This year we are asking that you think in terms of the standard biblical tithing: 10% of my income for charity – with 5% for my parish and 5% for other charities of my own choosing. Please prayerfully and carefully think through your commitment. And please complete your pledge form and return it to the parish in two weeks: by Oct. 16.

It is very important that you take an envelope with you and return a completed pledge form. Even if you tell yourself you can’t increase your pledge this year, please complete and *return the pledge form* – because we are going to mail this envelope to all households who do not return one by the 16th. So this will save staff and volunteers precious time and the parish the cost of mailing if you return the pledge form promptly.

And please pray that our annual reflection upon our sharing of treasure is successful this year.

- VI. Our first reading features the prophet Habakkuk who was discouraged with all the destruction and evil he saw in his day. He wondered if God was present – would better times ever come?

God responds and tells him – definitely, the vision is still there - to write it down – so that it is permanent and visible

- indeed God is present: the vision still has its time, presses on to fulfillment and will not disappoint.

Our dream of “making disciples,” of helping more and more people to come to know and love the Lord, also presses on. We should not be discouraged, but move forward with courage and faith that the flame of faith will be stirred up among us.