WHOEVER FINDS HIS Life WILL LOSE IT, AND WHOEVER LOSES HIS LIFE FOR MY SAKE will find it.

Matthew 10:39

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
JUNE 28, 2020
The Meaning of Discipleship

**Lectionary Notes for Sunday, June 28, 2020 from USCCB**

The first reading tells the story of Elisha's and a Shunammite woman's mutual service. The woman recognizes that Elisha is a man of God and a powerful prophet, and so she and her husband make space for him to stay in their home. Elisha in turn promises that the woman, who has no children and whose husband is advanced in years, will soon bear a son.

One important aspect of Elisha's story is that he is, in a sense, the successor to Elijah. When Elijah calls, he must leave everything, including his livelihood and family, to follow. He offers up the remnants of his former life as a sacrifice to the Lord. When Elijah is taken up into heaven, Elisha receives a “double portion” of the grace that operated in Elijah. The Elisha stories reveal the theme, ever-present throughout Scripture, that discipleship entails giving up one's whole life in order to truly gain it.

Both the reading from Romans and the gospel passage echo this theme. St. Paul teaches about what baptism means. This sacrament incorporates believers into the body of Christ; through it, the faithful have “died with Christ.” And, since through his dying and rising from the dead Christ has overcome death, the faithful, too, emerge from the waters of baptism to live in Christ, freed from the power of sin and death. It is in this dying that we are brought to new life.

Jesus presents the truth simply and powerfully: by losing one's life for Christ's sake, one finds it. It is in submitting our human wills totally and completely to the divine will, just as Jesus did in the Garden of Gethsemane, that we are brought from death to life.
All people desire to know their Creator. All people have a natural impulse to seek the good and to live in accordance with that good. All people can flourish when they pursue the truth about God and respond to the truth.

Religious freedom means that all people have the space to flourish. Religious freedom is both an American value and an important part of Catholic teaching on human dignity. When we promote religious freedom, we promote the common good and thus strengthen the life of our nation and the community of nations.

Learn more at www.usccb.org/ReligiousFreedomWeek!

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