

# ARE YOU FIT FOR KINGDOM OF GOD?



## Sunday Reflection With Fr. Rafal

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

On this **13th Sunday in Ordinary Time**, in today's Gospel Jesus speaks about those who are "fit" and those who are "not fit" for the kingdom of the God.

The tiniest gesture of faith can save a person. A man who embraces a crucifix on his deathbed can gain the kingdom of God. Once a woman told St. John Vianney that she was devastated because her husband had committed suicide. In a moment of mystical insight that only a great saint can receive, John Vianney exclaimed, "He is saved!" The woman was incredulous so the saint repeated, stressing each word, "I tell you he is saved. He is in Purgatory, and you must pray for him. Between the parapet of the bridge and the water he had time to make an act of contrition."

God can save a person in an instant - by a single act of faith. That is very good news. But I must advise you. Once you have made that step, he will not rest until you have given all. He will settle for nothing less. You cannot give part to Jesus and hold back a part for yourself - or even for some other person.

We see Jesus' exigency in today's Gospel. A man says he will follow Jesus anywhere. Jesus reminds the man, that while foxes have dens and birds have nests, he promises no earthly security. Another man wants to follow Jesus, but only after he has buried his father. That's not a bad thing. In fact, to care for one's father is very good, but you cannot put even that duty ahead of Jesus. Family is the greatest good here on earth, but we cannot put family ahead of Jesus.

There's a paradox in all this. If a person makes family his greatest value, he will eventually lose his family. Do you remember the Godfather movies? They showed a man who would do anything for his "family," including even theft and murder. In the end the Godfather destroys his own family. Now, we may not be tempted to the same corruption as the Godfather, but if we put any person ahead of Jesus, we will lose that person. On the other hand, if we put Jesus first, we will do the very best for the ones we love.

Finally, this is what Jesus tells us today when he speaks about those who are "fit for the kingdom of God." The person fit for the kingdom says "yes" to God; he puts Jesus first. The bottom line is this: Jesus will accept the tiniest step, but he will not rest until we have given him our totality.

Have a Blessed 13th Sunday in Ordinary Time!

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