

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Sunday, July 2, 2017

Life can be difficult. In our gospel reading today Jesus tells his apostles that following him WILL be difficult. Jesus says "whoever loses his life for my sake will find it". At first glance, the words seem disturbing. Jesus, of course, is talking about changing our lives and finding Him. In our culture today, we are surrounded by the lure of power, the desire for wealth and future security and the selfishness of closed community. Jesus asked his apostles to rise above their culture norms and be true, loving and just to all. He is asking us to do the same and the rewards will be many.

Many years ago, I discussed a Sunday gospel with the children at mass in Share the Word. I asked "what does Jesus mean to you?" The children responded "Jesus is love, teacher etc." But one little girl in the very back with a soft voice said "Jesus is FREEDOM". The freedom Jesus gives us is different than what we celebrate on our nation's birthday this week. Jesus gives a spiritual freedom from the anxiety of this world and we need to work at finding it inside ourselves.

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