

**Coop's Scoops # 216 Worship for Sunday June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

**Our Saviour Jesus Christ has abolished death,  
and brought life and immortality to  
light through the Gospel.**

**2 Timothy 1:10**



**The Readings:**

2 Samuel 6: 1-15    Psalm 24    2 Corinthians 8: 7-15

**The Collect:**

Almighty God, you have taught us through your Son that love fulfils the law. May we love you with all our heart, all our soul, all our mind, and all our strength, and may we love our neighbour as ourselves; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

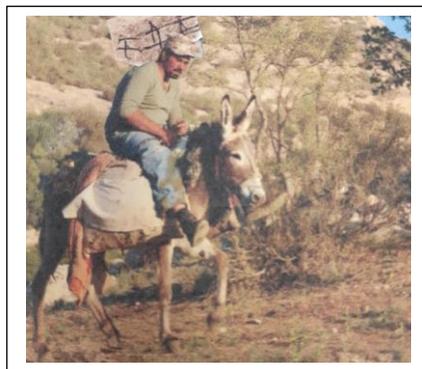
**The Holy Gospel: Mark 6:1-13**

**6**He left that place and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. **2**On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, "Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! **3**Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. **4**Then Jesus said to them, "Prophets are not without honor, except in their hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house." **5**And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. **6**And he was amazed at their unbelief.

Then he went about among the villages teaching. <sup>7</sup>He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. <sup>8</sup>He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; <sup>9</sup>but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. <sup>10</sup>He said to them, “Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. <sup>11</sup>If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.” <sup>12</sup>So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. <sup>13</sup>They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

The Sermon (It’s longer today, but I pray it will be worth your time)

A tourist noticed a wizened and well-tanned man riding a donkey in New Mexico. Nothing strange about that! But this man had a 200 pound sack of grain hoisted up on his shoulders. He was obviously having trouble with the weight of it. The tourist called to the man “Why don’t you just strap the grain to the donkey?” And the man said “Oh I couldn’t expect the poor old donkey to carry this much weight”. Ridiculous, isn’t it? The donkey was already carrying the weight of the man and everything on him, including the burden of the wheat.



That picture speaks volumes to my heart. It’s a picture of how we often carry heavy burdens ourselves – especially burdens placed there by others – burdens like rejection, abuse and mis-use; labels and condemnations that strip us of our dignity and our worth. We know that we are to cast, throw, leave our burdens with Jesus but somehow we keep lugging them around ourselves. We don’t seem to know how to untie them from our own shoulders and place them on the ONLY ONE who really is strong enough to manage the weights and burdens of the

whole world. In Luke's Gospel narration this morning, I believe that Jesus gives us a very practical way to do that. He gives us **something like** a Sacrament. An outward and visible sign of an invisible and inward grace. For this morning, although it is certainly not a recognized Sacrament of the Church, I want to talk to you about the **Sacrament for Rejection**.

Jesus is busy in His home town this morning – at the Synagogue teaching! His neighbours gathered around Him have heard words of mighty miracles and acts of power accomplished at His command. They are amazed, but also a bit haughty about things. Isn't this Jesus, you know the carpenter, Mary and Joseph's son, we know His four brothers and His sisters are here with us! He's just an ordinary carpenter, how can things be true? At least some of them spoke out offending Jesus. And He mildly replied something like "Yes, I know what you're thinking; in the old times, people thought the same thing about the Prophets. The ones who did not believe were their neighbours, the Priests and their own families." The folks in the synagogue didn't "get" that point, and refused to believe. And Jesus power was reduced by their unbelief. Yet, He was able to heal a few humble folks who came with open hearts. It is kind of unthinkable that any human state of mind could reduce the power of Jesus. There are two connections necessary for a connection between Jesus and anyone.....one is that Jesus speaks His word of power; the other is that there must be an open heart and mind to receive it. Sort of like the old saying "You cannot hold the hand of God with a closed fist!" It was a very hard day at the synagogue for Jesus.

But He picks things right up and gathers His disciples to send them out on a mission without Him! First time. So He gives them advice their marching orders. Don't go alone...2 x 2 is the way to go. Take no purse, no money, no extra shoes, and don't waste time dilly-dallying along the way chatting people up. Stay where you are invited, eat what is placed before you, and don't go looking for the best accommodation or wines. Offer a blessing of peace and do your ministry. If they receive you, well and good: tell them the Kingdom of God is very near. But if they don't receive you, don't look back, go your way, and do this. **Wipe the dust off your feet as a witness against them.**

Jesus well knew the impact of rejection. Rejection had hurt Him: rejection from His family, His home town, His synagogue and His people. He never threw up

His hands and stalked off. He kept on building the team that He is now sending out to do His work. He commissions and sends 70 of His followers off to prepare the towns and villages of the countryside for Him to come to teach. He gives them authority. He gives them instructions about what to do and how to do it. And He tells them to wipe the dust off their feet in the places where they are rejected. This is what I call the Sacrament for Rejection.

‘When you go,’ Jesus tells them, ‘there will be people who reject you. People who won’t welcome you or even listen to you. People who discount you entirely. And when they reject you in this way, I want you to wipe the dust off your feet as you leave town. And this meant, in my words, “Let them know that you will not carry even a speck of their rejection one step further. You won’t accept their judgment of your worth. You’ll consider whatever they fling at you like mere dust, and shake it off your feet and carry on without the burden of shouldering rejection.” Those who offended the traveling disciples were not condemned for not **believing**; they were condemned for not even being willing to listen, for not taking time to be hospitable. For their rejection of the human worth and dignity of the messengers.

That always hurts so much. We’ve all experienced it, not in the same ways or to the same degrees, but we know what it feels like. It feels like carrying a 200 pound sack of grain on your shoulders for your whole life. Children who are abused, spouses who are battered, people of all ages who are ignored and held to be invisible, people who are never allowed to be wrong, people who are the dreamers, the different, the difficult and in our culture particularly, the unattractive ...ALL suffer from rejection of their very selfhood and often come to believe they are not worthy of love, care, attention, nurturing, and inclusion. Many, many cannot shake off that unworthy, unloved label. It is a lie, but it defines their life.

**Here is His truth that destroys the lie.** If **anyone** comes to Me I will never ever reject them and tell them to go away....I want **you to have life** and have an overflowing abundant joyful life...**I love you just the same way and to the same degree as the Father loves Me** you in ...**You** can do all things because I will strengthen you...You honour Me **when you give Me your weakness, because that is what my Strength is perfect for**...I will never, ever leave you and I will give you

things to do that matter for all eternity. **That is the truth.** If we have to wear labels, we should be wearing **stickies** that say “Beloved – Valued – honourable – worthwhile – cherished – Belonging”



If and when and whenever people say or do things that cause us to feel rejected, we need to reject rejection. Not let it stick to us. We can shake of the dust by wiping our feet and refusing to carry it one inch with us on our journey. Jesus Christ is our burden bearer ...He carries us like little lambs on His shoulder...and He is quite capable of carrying off and away whatever we give over to Him. He is nothing like a frail aging donkey. When He tells us to wipe the dust of rejection right off of our feet He is giving us a visible sign of the invisible grace we have already received. What grace is that? The grace of hearing Him call us Beloved and worthy and holy in His sight. The grace of wearing His robes of righteousness.

Most of you will have door mat, but any little mat will do. If you are struggling with rejection, or even just want to practice up for the rejection which is inevitably to come, please take a sacred moment and wipe your feet. Make the outward sign . Give the rejection over to Jesus. Put it in His care. You may need to do other things too– see a counselor, come for prayer, change some environments, whatever – but you can begin the process of inward healing with the outward sign that Jesus provided for His disciples.

Wipe the dust off your feet. He is faithful. Amen.



**Prayer:**

Spirit of the Living God, you have been with us today. First there was sunrise and sunset will come, we are grateful for both. Family and friends are gifts of your grace. We are thankful for them. You inspire us to new possibilities of mission and give us strength to bring them into reality according to your Will.

Thank you for your action in our lives, and hearts and minds. You claim us as your Beloveds, and we thank you for speaking Truth to us in the midst of a world of lies. To you be honour and praise for ever and ever, Amen.

**The Lord's Prayer****The Blessing**

May God who has called you equip you in every good thing that you do that which pleases Him and blesses others, and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be upon you and remain with you always.

- Judie+