

TO SOW  
IS TO  
LOVE.

**Homily hints 2014**

In preparation for World Mission Sunday



**October 12, 2014** 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday of ordinary time

**Mt 22:1-14 - The Wedding Feast**

Today's Gospel shows us, with a parable, that many guests do not respond to the invitation. It is something that we understand clearly today when we take into account that our churches are more empty than full. It is not only the attendance to religious services that is decreasing. There is also a large decrease in everything related to religion. It is difficult to find volunteers to teach catechism and even young people who are willing to be catechized. The parable tells us that the king sent out his servants to the streets and asks them to invite other guests, guests that do not fit the original description of those initially invited to his son's wedding. Eventually, the banquet hall was filled with people and despite the guest, who was not wearing proper clothes, the wedding took place and everyone enjoyed the banquet. It was a great celebration.

Next Sunday, we will celebrate World Mission Sunday. We are like those servants that the king sent out to tell the invited guests to come. The answers that we might receive are strangely similar to those found in the parable. Some guests are more concerned about their fields and their businesses; others will even ridicule us and mock about the banquet that we offer in the king's name. We must find different guests. He told us to go and make disciples of all nations. Today, we must invite people to become Christians based on their own circumstances, to be Christians differently. We must remember that love is the essence of Christ's message. Let us invite to the feast those who are able to love and those who need to be loved. This will be the theme for World mission Sunday: TO SOW IS TO LOVE.

**October 13, 2014** Ferial Monday

**Lk 11:29-32 - Jonah's Miracle**

Jesus' listeners wanted a miracle, some sort of prestidigitation trick, in order to believe that Jesus was really a messenger of God. Faith is not the result of a razzle-dazzle, but comes from an intimate encounter with God. That is why Jesus spoke about the miracle of Jonah. Like Jonah who spent three days inside the great whale, Jesus will also spend three days in the tomb before his resurrection. It is less spectacular than any sign from heaven, but its deeper value is much more wonderful. Jesus says that the people of Nineveh will stand up against this generation because they converted when they heard Jonah's preaching even if it wasn't a homiletic wonder.

In his long conversation with God, as described in the fourth and last chapter of the Book of Jonah, Jonah found the true reason of his conversion, the true sign that every person who seeks the truth about God should find:

"Jonah was very unhappy about this and became angry. So he prayed, 'Lord, didn't I say before I left home that this is just what you would do? That's why I did my best to run away to Spain! I knew that you are a loving and merciful God, always patient, always kind, and always ready to change your mind and not punish.'" (Jon 4:1-2)

Jonah would have wanted to preach about a strict and vengeful God, one who would have had all human flaws. By showing us a God who is love, by loving him and loving all humans as he did, we will become the missionaries that the Church needs today.

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**October 14, 2014** Ferial Tuesday

**Lk 11:37-41 - Ritual Ablutions**

The Jews were scandalized because Jesus didn't do the ritual ablutions before eating. Jesus explains clearly that what is important is not the outer rite, but what lies within the heart. Some persons have a heart filled with impurities, but they take good care of their appearances. It is, the heart, it is love that is important. We should not judge others by their appearance. Formerly, we used to say that the cowl does not make the monk.

Next Sunday, we will celebrate World Mission Sunday; we are all invited to become missionaries and proclaim the Good News, the Gospel of love. When we proclaim the Gospel, we might have a tendency to insist too much on the exterior details and not enough on love, which is essential. Even secular rites are called to step aside and make room for simpler things, things that really reflect love which doesn't have to be concealed behind the ritual screen of time and history. Saint Augustine said: "Love, and do what you will"

**October 15, 2014** Wednesday, Saint Teresa of Avila

**Lk 11:42-46 - The Pharisees' Malediction**

Jesus was very strict with those who were legalists (today's fundamentalists). A missionary must acculturate himself; he has to seek for goodness in the mentality of the people he wishes to evangelize. He must not try to impose principals and rites that are not relevant to them.

In 1659, the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith published this instruction: "What could be more absurd than introducing the cultures of France, Spain, Italy or even any other European country into China? You are not a messenger of our culture, but of faith that does not destroy cultural traditions of other people, but conserves them if they are not bad."

Today's missionaries, and all Christians, must be missionaries. They have the duty to present the Gospel in its essence and not to be against the customs and different ways in which some people pray, express their faith and, even sometimes, believe in God.

**October 16, 2014** Thursday, Saint Marguerite d'Youville

**Mt 25:31-46 - I Was Hungry and You Fed Me**

Today, we celebrate the feast of the first Canadian saint. She was called the Mother of universal charity. Yet, today's Gospel talks about universal charity. Through this speech, Jesus explains clearly that by loving the poor and the needy, we are his true servants and friends. Marguerite is a good example of that love. All suffering and poverty finds assistance through her. She sowed love around her. She was the instrument that God used to love the poor. What a wonderful example received in preparation for World Mission Sunday! To sow is to love, to love the needy in order to love God himself; all the Christian and missionary vocation is presented to us right there. As our country is still considered missionary, this saint showed us what to do under those circumstances. Today, we realize that our country is becoming missionary again. Let us follow the example of Saint Marguerite and let us find, as she did, means to sow God's love around us and everywhere on Earth.

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## Leaflet - 3

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**Thursday of ordinary time**

### **Lk 11:47-54 - Building the Tombs of the Prophets we Killed**

Jesus continues to strongly criticize the Scribes and the Pharisees. He proclaims the truth. He dares to attack those who present themselves as good people. Proclaiming the truth is often something audacious. As soon as Christ's speech is finished, they try to find reasons to get rid of him. At first, they tried to get rid of him because he questioned society's most important persons. Then, they nitpicked to see if either one of his words will give them reason. Eventually, they will kill him.

The Church must proclaim the Gospel even if she is human and sinner. The Gospel is concerned about what lies within the heart. Obstacles will come from those who go by appearances and forget the prophecies to admire the prophets' tombs. Like the disciple who is not above his master, the missionary should often expect to be criticized as Jesus was. Nevertheless, it is not a reason to stop the evangelization of peoples.

**October 17, 2014** Friday, Saint Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch

### **Lk 12:1-7 - The Pharisees' Yeast**

This text from the Gospel talks about truth and trust. The Pharisees' yeast is treacherous; it is what raises the dough, but it is not the truth, or God's true love; it is what keeps up the appearances, but in reality, it is a sham. All fear and hesitation that we might experience, in order to bear witness of our belonging to the Lord, our use of the true yeast of love, must vanish through trust in God, who knows that we are more valuable than any bird.

This coming Mission Sunday invites us precisely to sow love and use the good yeast so the evangelical dough will raise and fulfill the world. In order for unleavened bread to become bread, it only requires the yeast of love. In order for the Good News to become widespread, it is necessary that we become interested in its propagation; that we become aware of our global responsibility. Snow can only melt if it is exposed to the sun's rays; hatred and mistakes can only disappear when love floods the world.

**October 18, 2014** Saturday, Saint Luke, the Evangelist

### **Lk 10:1-9 - The Disciples' Missionary Outreach**

Today, it seems that Jesus sent his disciples to do a field experience. He doesn't deny the difficulty of what he asks them: *like lambs among wolves*. The task is immense: There is a large harvest, but few workers to gather it in. He doesn't target the place of their apostleship: *Whenever you go into a house...Whenever you go into a town*. Despite the problems than can occur and that will certainly occur, remember that the Kingdom of God has come near you!

Today, Jesus sends missionaries to proclaim the Good News, just as he did in his time. He sends each and every one of us. There are many ways to preach: through words, but also through example and service. It is important to realize that all of us are sent. Whatever the place, the house or the city, the neighborhood or distant country, towards our fellow countryman or a stranger, we must accept our departure, leave behind our comfort and evangelize, according to our own possibilities and situations. What is important is to proclaim the Gospel.

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**October 19, 2014** World Mission Sunday

### **Mt 13:3-9 - The Parable of the Sower**

This parable is normally used with the purpose of inviting us to become good soil; it calls us out so we can grow within us the Word of God. It is certainly an excellent practice. Today, we would like to look for another lesson in that text from the Gospel. The sower sows everywhere, not only on good soil. Who is this sower? It is Christ, of course, but it is also each and every one of us who are invited to follow him and to sow as he did. Everyone has to receive the seeds, the Good News of the Gospel. What are those seeds that have to be sowed everywhere? It is love. This year's theme for World Mission Sunday is: TO SOW IS TO LOVE.

Today, there are many defeatist people who believe that there is no point in sowing the Word because they say that people don't listen anymore. We are under the impression that we are preaching in the desert. It is possible that the real problem is that we sow words rather than actions. Love is not only a nice sentimental poem; it is an act of dedication, self-denial and caring for others. Today, on this World Mission Sunday, we are invited to be generous, to sow love by donating money according to our capacities and generosity, but also by showing an interest in our brothers and sisters who live in distant countries that we still consider countries of mission. Prayer is a gift, and praying is something that everyone can do; it is free seeds that bear good fruit when we have faith.

**29<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time** (for those who have decided to use the ordinary Mass)

### **Mt 22:15-21: Tribute to Caesar**

"Well, then, pay to the Emperor what belongs to the Emperor, and pay to God what belongs to God." In the first reading, Isaiah told us: "I alone am the Lord, the only one who can save you." Saint Paul who wrote to Timothy tells him not to become attached to discussions that really don't favour God's plan. It is clear that it is necessary to pay your taxes if you want the proper functioning of the state. Once you have done this, it is important to know what God's plan is. The state has laws and control systems to make sure that we pay what we owe. God does not use the power of coercion upon us. He shows us his universal law, which is love. Then, he gives us the freedom of choosing to accept or ignore his law. In any case, love does not impose itself; it appears at our door and waits for us to open it.

Today, it is World Mission Sunday. Jesus, who is our master of love, asks us to never forget his last commandment, the last request that he made to his disciples before his ascension: "Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples" Today, we are asked to think about our human brothers who live in the poorest countries and to be generous in order to help them as well as all the people who bring them the Good News. To be generous doesn't mean that we have to give money. This would be too easy and it could be a soulless donation. We must love all peoples, accept all strangers who live near us, show our love in every way, without forgetting to pray.