

Commentary on the Gospel for Tue, Oct 14th 2014

Freedom and mercy--how sweet those two words sound! Today let us reflect on our desire for freedom and mercy in a loving relationship with our God and God's desire for us to live in freedom and to gratefully accept mercy as we live out our faith in love.

The readings today place freedom and mercy within the context of a relationship with God that calls us to love God and one another. Freedom is not a self-centered license to do whatever we want -- it is freedom from oppressive pressures that pull us from a focus on love. The Galatians worry that they need to follow the ritual of circumcision. Paul puts the focus back on having faith that works itself out in love. When the Pharisees dwell on ritual as essential, Jesus puts the emphasis back on love by telling them to give alms to love those in need. The Psalm models an expression of love for God in the form of grateful reflection on what God calls us to do as we live in His love. Mercy frees us from the oppression of dwelling on our past failings and from paralysis that we could never live up to the high standards of the life of love to which God calls us.

Today let us ask Jesus to help us to see what gets in the way of our ability to be free to focus on love. What drives us and distracts us in ways that pull us away from gratefully dwelling in God's love for us and from care for one another including those in need? Let us reflect in gratitude on God's mercy so that forgiveness can free us from regret and help us to get up and start again when we fall into those traps. No doubt we will have to reset and start again more than once today. How wonderful to have a God who is so loving and merciful! God calls us to partner in extending love, mercy, and forgiveness to others. We lay down our life and all that distracts and oppresses us to enter into a life of love -- gratefully aware of God's intimate love for each one of us and the promises of joy, peace, and life abundant that await us in this life of freedom and mercy.

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