

Commentary on the Gospel for Mon, Jan 19th 2015

In today's gospel reading, Mark 2:18-22, Christ talks about two integrated concepts: the old versus the new and joyfulness. He refers to himself as a bridegroom and calls us to celebrate with him when he says, "As long as they (the disciples) have the bridegroom with them they cannot fast." In The Church of Mercy, our beloved Pope Francis also intentionally calls us to be JOYFUL. "And here the first word that I wish to say to you: joy! Do not be men and women of sadness: a Christian can never be sad! Never give way to discouragement! Ours is not a joy born of having many possessions, but of having encountered a Person: Jesus, in our midst."

One might ask, "We live in a broken, messy world; how can we be joyful?" Christ answers that question in today's gospel by telling us that He is the new eternal life. He is the Savior of all humankind!

The reading today implies old and new things do not mix well together. The examples Christ gives are, "No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth (new cloth) on an old cloak. ...no one pours new wine into old wineskins, the wine will burst the skins." The old ways are difficult to change, yet to follow Christ we are called to move away from our sinful ways and grow closer to Him. When we are in relationship with Christ, we can experience a sense of peace and true joyfulness. We still carry the burden of our brokenness, yet we can know and feel Christ's unconditional love. His life and death are powerful reasons to rejoice.

Dear Lord,

You are our Savior. Your life and death create new life for us. Please Lord Jesus, let us hear and respond joyfully to your call. When we are feeling broken, lost and alone, let us feel your presence and your love in our lives. You want us to be joyful because you have set us free. Please let us live joyful lives and bring your joy to others. In your holy name, we pray.

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