

The Paper Pulpit

(Reflections from the Pastor)

20th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reflection: Mark Link tells a story entitled, "The Nut That Saved Our Marriage." Now you can't read a title like that and not wonder who that nut was. Perhaps it might be a husband who had a sense of humor that defused situations before they got explosive. Or perhaps it might be one of their children who did something funny to make the couple laugh when situations got tense. Or it might even be a friend who made them see how silly it was to focus on the bad points each had, when they both had so many good points. Well, the answer was none of the above. The author claims one day she was having lunch with her husband and their son, Mike. Mike was a navy helicopter pilot who was visiting. At one point during the lunch, Mike and his father began talking about the helicopter that Mike flew. Mike said, "You know, Dad, as complicated as that helicopter is, its whirling rotor is held in place by a single hexagonal nut." Then turning to his mother, Mike said, "And, Mom, do you know what they call that nut?" His mother shrugged. She had no idea what they called it. "I give up," she said, "What do they call the nut that holds it all together?" Mike smiled and said, "They call it the 'Jesus' nut."

It is significant that almost every time that Jesus was invited into a home he worked a miracle for those who lived there. For example, when the bride and groom invited Jesus to their wedding, he changed water into wine. When Peter invited Jesus into his home, Jesus cured Peter's mother-in-law. When a Roman centurion invited Jesus into his home, Jesus healed his servant. When Mary and Martha invited Jesus into their home, he raised their brother Lazarus from the dead. When Jairus invited Jesus into his home, Jesus restored his daughter to life. So if we invited Jesus into our home, wouldn't he do the same for us? The answer to that question is clear. If our marriage, our family, or our personal life is in trouble, maybe it's because we've left Jesus out of it.

Jesus is the vine and we are the branches. Without him, our lives would fall apart. Our lives need to be rooted in him. If we are not rooted in him, then our lives will degenerate and stray from the good path because we are weak human beings, subject to temptations. If we are rooted in him, then we will be rooted in love, because God is love. Consider that Jesus could very well be the nut missing from our lives, the one nut that could put us back together.

Jesus says: "Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing." If our marriage or our family is in trouble, maybe it's because we have forgotten about the nut that God destined to hold it together. Maybe we have forgotten about Jesus. Maybe we have left Jesus out. Maybe we haven't invited Jesus into our marriage or into our home. Our personal relationships with others in our families and our jobs are very complicated and can easily go wrong. They are like the vine: they need constant care and attention or they will grow wild. These relationships need to be rooted in Christ and the commands he has given us. They need to be rooted in the example of love and forgiveness that he has given us.

Want to have a better understanding of your faith? Want to be able to share your faith with others, but don't feel qualified? Know someone who wants to know more about the Catholic Church.

Come to our parish's weekly bible study.

Channel 19 – Eternal Word Television Network – 24 hour Catholic Television

93.9 FM – Relevant Radio – 24 hour Catholic Radio

RCIA: Are you (or someone you know):

- an unconfirmed adult in the Catholic Church and wish to be confirmed?
- from another Christian denomination interested in joining the Catholic Church?
- Catholic but not confirmed and are getting married in the Catholic Church?
- non-Catholic and married to a Catholic and have been attending Mass with them?
- not baptized and would like to be?

We would love to have you part of the Church and our parish community. Please contact Fr. Jim as soon as possible to learn more about joining the Catholic Church.

Sincerely in Christ, Fr. Jim Trempe