

Is your house a worthy house?

Recently, I had the honor of blessing my niece and nephew's new home. It wasn't a huge mansion in Germantown or Collierville or down on the bluff overlooking the river, but a small apartment for a newly married couple just starting their family. The important part was not the size or the location of the home but the **FAITH** of the people who live there.

This week's Gospel readings reminded me that a central part of the rite of blessing a new home ... right at the very beginning after invoking the Trinity ... is the **CORE** of the blessing:

“Peace be with this house and with all who live here.”

Our Gospel readings all week have been leading up to what we sometimes call the Great Commission.

In Tuesday's Gospel reading, Matthew quoted Jesus, saying: “The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest.”

Wednesday's Gospel revealed the names of the Twelve disciples who were to become apostles and then Jesus sent them and the other disciples out with the mission of proclaiming the Kingdom of Heaven.

Their mission was further explained in Thursday's reading from Matthew. Jesus said: "Whatever town or village you enter, look for a worthy person in it, and stay there until you leave. As you enter a house, **wish it peace**. If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; if not, let your peace return to you. Whoever will not receive you or listen to your words go outside that house or town and **shake the dust from your feet**."

I think we have to ask ourselves, "What sort of person is a 'worthy person'?" and "What sort of house is a 'worthy house'?" Are **WE** "worthy persons"? Are **OUR** homes "worthy homes"?

Then, in Friday's scripture, Jesus tells His disciples, "Behold, I am sending you like sheep in the midst of wolves ... you will be hated by all because of my name, but whoever endures to the end will be saved."

Saturday we read: "And do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul ..."

Which brings us again to today's Gospel where Mark quotes Jesus saying:
"Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave. Whatever place does not welcome you or listen to you, leave there and shake **the dust off your feet** in testimony against them."

This past week, I was at the Benedictine archabbey in St. Meinrad, Indiana, for a liturgical training conference for Catholic youth and youth ministers.

There were many liturgies and rites during the week, including Morning and Evening Prayer, Night Prayer, Reconciliation, a Recommitment Rite, and, of course, Daily Mass.

One of the Benedictines reminded us that we, too, are being sent out into a world that **HATES** us ... a world that **DOESN'T** accept our values ... a world that clings to **EVIL** instead of **GOOD** ... a world that puts **PLEASURE** and **CONVENIENCE** above **CHASTITY** and the **LIVES OF UNBORN HUMAN CHILDREN**. A world that takes us to court ... legislates against us ... ridicules us ... and often does us harm in any and every way that they can.

Think about this.

At the end of mass, the deacon says to the people: “The mass is ended. Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.”

And we say in return: **“Thanks be to God!”**

Isn't that a strange response? Here we are at mass, worshiping God and partaking of the Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and the deacon has the **NERVE** to say to us **GET OUT!!!**

But ... we meekly say ... “Thank you”!

Jesus told the Apostles to get out, too, and The Twelve were so driven by their commission that they could not be silenced.

They were so driven by their commission that the human comforts we take for granted were of no consequence.

There was a time when people went willingly to foreign countries and lived in whatever conditions existed for the native population. They didn't bring their own food or medical supplies. And they often went with little to no likelihood of **EVER** returning.

They were **SENT** ... !!!

Just like **YOU** are being sent.

What's that you say? You **HAVEN'T** been sent?

Wait ...

Remember what the deacon has to say at the end of mass?

“GO!!!”

Oh, it sounds nicer than **“GET OUT!!!”**

But he **IS** nevertheless telling you to get out ... to **GO!!!**

GO IN PEACE TO LOVE AND SERVE THE LORD!!!

You may be saying to yourself, **ALL** of us can't be called to preach. Well, OK. You say you can't do that.

My mother would always say “Can't' never got you anywhere.”

But I can appreciate that people are given different charisms, that is, different gifts by the Holy Spirit. I certainly was not given the gift of song.

So if you don't feel that you are called to bring the Word of God to the world, perhaps you are what Jesus called “a worthy person.”

Or maybe your home is what he called “a worthy home.”

One thing we should not **EVER** have happen to us is for one of His chosen ones to stand outside our house and shake the dust from his feet ... !!!

We are called by His baptism to be members of the Mystical Body of Christ. To love him and serve him. And that means that we may be **IN** the world but we should not be **OF** the world.

The world's values are not ours and we should not be silent when we see a great wrong.

So ...

GO!!! GET OUT!!!

BE WORTHY. MAKE YOUR HOUSE WORTHY.

BUT GO. GET OUT THERE AND SERVE THE LORD.