

26 Sunday OT B 2018
Frazee/Callaway

I am humbled when I think about your commitment to the parish, to the faith and to prayers for me. Thank you. I hold all you in my prayers daily.

Imagine the disciples coming across a stranger. The man was on the edge of the city, off the road where lunatics gather to beg for food. Sometimes someone tossed them a loaf of bread or a dried fig into this gathering, but nobody ever drew near. Those people were dangerous. They were unclean. The hope of the city: one day they would all just disappear.

The stranger—the man must have been crazy himself. He left the safety of the road, and, in the midst of that brokenness, he stood. One at a time he drew near to each person. He laid his hands on them and in the name of Jesus he drove out demons. He healed them.

As they were passing by, the disciples heard the name of Jesus. They were outraged! They believed themselves to be solely in possession of the name of Jesus. It was as if they owned the trademark, “Jesus!”

When the disciples of Jesus saw the man they rushed to him and tried to prevent him from using Jesus’ name. Can you hear them from across the road, “Hey! Stop that. You can’t use the name of Jesus. You are not one of us. You shouldn’t be driving out demons or healing or giving comfort to those people.”

All this they reported to Jesus.

Jesus said, “Do not prevent him.”

Today, who owns the name of Jesus? Do you feel like you need permission from someone to perform a mighty deed?

It seems that there is a growing movement among Catholics—you want to do something! You want to heal those possessed by demons. You want to heal the little ones who have been wounded by sin.

I want to tell you something. You don't need permission from me, the bishop or the pope. Listen to Canon 215:

The Christian faithful are at liberty freely to found and direct associations for purposes of charity or piety or for the promotion of the Christian vocation in the world and to hold meetings for the common pursuit of these purposes.

Two weeks ago, a cardinal in Chicago said that there is "a crisis of confidence in church leaders who failed to protect those in their care, and a crisis of faith in the church itself."

He is half right. There is a crisis of confidence in Church leaders. There is, however, not a crisis of faith. You have your eyes fixed on Jesus. You know without a doubt the grace that comes from heaven to us through the Sacraments. The Catholic Church holds the deposit of faith, the fullness of revelation. To whom shall we go? We are not going anywhere.

So, what are you to do with the crisis of confidence in Church leaders? You are not unfaithful or disloyal or taking matters into your own hands when you exercise a **right** that you already possess:

YOU are at liberty freely...
To found and direct associations...
For the purposes of charity or piety...
For the promotion of the Christian vocation in the world...
and to hold meetings for the common pursuit of these purposes...

There may be a crisis of confidence in Church leaders...but I am confident in you. There is something brewing in you that is for the good of the Church.

If I see the lights on late at night in the Church, I will not barge in to your meeting room and ban you from using the name of Jesus. You do not need my permission to meet, to plan and to act for prayer or for the coordination of the work of charity.

Don't be distracted from the faith. If you have been inspired with a vision to make things right or at least better...do it.