21stSunday in Ordinary Time, 2013

THEME: NARROW DOOR

READINGS: Isaiah 66:18-21/ Hebrews 12:5-7, 11-13/ Luke 13:22-30

By Very Rev. Fr. John Louis ([http://frlouis.com](http://frlouis.com/))

Last Sunday, we were reminded of the inestimable price that Jesus Christ has paid for our salvation. Today he tells us that we also have a contribution to make towards our salvation.

Our past interaction (including eating and drinking) with a childhood friend who is now rich and famous does not necessarily make us rich and famous. Similarly Jesus says being familiar with him (including eating and drinking with him in the Holy Eucharist) does not necessarily qualify us to enter eternal life.

Again, having been taught by a great teacher does not necessarily make us pass our exams if we do not put in our bit. Similarly Jesus says having heard him preach (through a priest or personal reading of the Bible) is not sufficient to enable us enter his kingdom; we have to do more than just hearing his Word.

To illustrate the fact that we also have a part to play in order to enter the kingdom of God, Jesus uses the imagery of ***passing through a narrow door***. To be able to enter a narrow door, we may have to drop our luggage, or go through it sideways, or even squeeze our body through it.

***Dropping our luggage***: When the rich man could not give up his wealth to follow Jesus, our Lord said: ‘it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God’ (Mt. 19:24). So ‘money worshipping’ is a luggage one has to drop so as to enter the kingdom. Other types of luggage are ‘fame worshipping’, the burden of sins, and the load of un-forgiveness. Beloved, lets us drop any of these luggage if we are carrying it.

***Walking sideways***: We may not be carrying any luggage but our ‘spiritual obesity’(i.e. pride or self-righteousness) may hinder our entrance through the narrow door. In that case, let us try to go through the door sideways. That is, let us renounce pride and be humble.

***Squeezing through***: Our problem may not be the carrying of an obstructive luggage or the obesity of self-righteousness, but rather the lack of the positive effort to squeeze through the narrow door.The positive effort means being doers of the Word (i.e. being obedient of God, prayerful, charitable, etc.).

Conclusion: May God grant us the courage to drop our obstructive luggage, the humility to deflate our ‘spiritual obesity’, and the spiritual passion to ceaselessly act on his Word. Amen!