

Daily Homily
Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
28 June 2020
[USCCB Daily Reading](#)

All peoples, clap your hands. Cry to God with shouts of joy!

*Entrance Antiphon
Psalm 47: 2*

St. John of the Cross was short in stature but a rather intimidating figure. His spirituality either resonates with an individual or it doesn't. One thing is for sure, he is passionate about God. His relationship with God was everything intimate and even romantic. It was that relationship which made him, as an individual, who he was. He was focused, centered even in the midst of storms and challenges and difficulties. He was an individual who knew himself what he was capable of doing that was good and great, but he also knew his capacity for evil and sin so that he could avoid it and not give in.

One concept in his field of spirituality is the idea of allowing our gods to die. I did not say, "allow God to die." I said *gods* to die, as in lower case "g" ... o ... d... s. Another way to put it, allowing our false gods our false idols to die.

So let's do an examination of conscience of sorts. Do you believe in false gods? Do you have false idols?

Jesus calls up two today from the gospel proclaimed. His words are as controversial today as they were in his own time of Ancient Palestine. The culture of his day was all about family, family was everything, everything revolved around family life.

So for Jesus to say, "if you love your family more than me... you are not worthy of me." That sent some his disciples walking, they turned away from him. Today, the words still won't go away. The demand of discipleship is still here in our community. Do you make family into a god? Do you make family an idol? Is it family first, and then everything else after that, including God?

If so, the challenge of the gospel today is: recalculate. It's not that you are supposed to hate your family, or not take care of family or not be responsible in fulfilling your role in the family, but if faith isn't first, if God, isn't first before family than the meaning of family is diminished, the meaning of family is reduced. A family based first on God, a family based first on faith puts that relationship into perspective. Family as a god is not all it's cracked up to be. Family as a god will sometimes disappoint. God is always true. God will never disappoint. God will make family what it's meant to be.

Pope Saint John Paul II said, "To maintain a joyful family requires much from both parents and children. Each member of the family has to become, in a special way, the servant of the

other's." We are disciples of the Lord first, so he can teach us in turn how to relate to other, how to be family to each other, how to be community and even Church, how to serve others.

Another part of this Examination of Conscience, there is another god, another idols Jesus raises for us to consider, the god of me, myself and I. The god of "my will be done." The god of "I want." The god of "I'm entitled." The god of self-absorption. Jesus address it in these words, "whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me." The cross says it all for the disciple. The vertical beam represents the "I" (as in me, myself and I). The horizontal beam, crosses the "I" out. Jesus on the cross, the only way to true living is through self-giving, self-sacrificing for the good and love of others. It leads to the fullness of finding life... it leads to resurrection.

When we say "thy will be done" ... "God's will be done," when we lose our life, ourself, our ego, whatever preoccupies us, absorbs us, when we lose these gods, this idols for the one, true God, then our life, we will find it.

Discipleship is not a hobby. Being Catholic is not a hobby. It is everything. It is demanding. We all know that. We live the demands.

But while it is demanding, it is also so rewarding. If you fearlessly (from Jesus' advise last week) give yourself away to God, you will receive so much more in return. Priesthood has been that way for me. I am so unworthy of what I do. I receive so much more in return than what I could ever give away.

I know that's true for many of you in your own vocations. You live the demands of discipleship. You put God first, some of you are praised for this. I also know that there are those in our community who are persecuted for this, some in your own family, because God is first. Do not be afraid to keep Him there as number one. Everything else will be put in proper perspective, your very life and purpose and meaning even, will all be found.