



Day 35: Brother

Jesus, Our Brother

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” Luke 10:27

A major battle to live our mission in the Kingdom of God is to love our neighbor as ourselves. Love is hard! But you are part of God's family, and this family battles for love! When the Father sent His Son to be born of the Virgin Mary, He became a part of a real human family. The Son of God now becomes the Son of Mary, and He becomes the “firstborn within a large family” (Romans 8:29). Jesus the Son becomes our brother! In a real way He makes us family and invites us to love each other in a certain way. In Luke 10, Jesus tells a powerful story that brings to life His mission to be our ‘brother.’ Jesus presented the truth that love of God is always linked to the love of neighbor. “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself” (Luke 10:27). To give us an example, He told the story of a poor, wounded man left for dead on the side of the road. Two professional religious men ignored the suffering man and walked right by him at a distance. But the third man stopped, as his heart was moved with compassion for his suffering brother. It is clear that this ‘brother’ is a different type of man who is able to love others, even in difficult situations. He is “the one who showed him mercy” (Luke 10:37). This is the identity of a true brother in the Kingdom, the one who loves like God. Amazingly, the Church teaches that Jesus Himself is the Good Samaritan, the King of Love, who shows us the perfect example of how to love as a true brother.

Mary, Full of Compassion

Mary's whole life bears witness to the Gospel mandate to ‘love your neighbor as yourself’ (Luke 10:27). While Jesus was true God and true man, His Sacred Heart possessed the fullness of love and mercy. But in the mystery of Him coming to be a part of a human family, I think it is helpful for us to use our holy imagination to think about how Mary and Joseph set an example for Jesus of how to love His neighbor as Himself. Mary and Joseph lived the Gospel mandate perfectly in their relationships with one another. Their hearts and thus their home were full of compassion, as they were constantly moved by the suffering and needs of the people around them. The Visitation and the Wedding Feast at Cana are great examples of this. This is how Jesus grew up, as His human heart was

formed by his parents who were such beautiful examples of compassion and love of neighbor.

St. Juan Diego and Us

You are a brother of Jesus and to every human person. St. Juan Diego is a powerful witness of living the mission of a brother. Following the establishment of the hermitage of Our Lady on Tepeyac Hill, Juan Diego dedicated his life to prayer, fasting, and penance, but he was never cut off from the people. Msgr. Chavez describes this period of his life: "St. Juan Diego edified the others with his testimony and his word and he was venerated even in life. In fact, they would come to him so that he would intercede for their needs, petitions, and the supplications of his people because 'when he begged and asked our Lady, everything was granted.' Lowly people would recognize him and venerate him as a true saint." His mission became a source of healing for others. His witness is a concrete example of Jesus' call for all of His disciples in Matthew 25. In these deeply anointed and challenging words, Jesus makes our mission clear:

"Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.'... 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'

Jesus' words pack a punch. They teach us that our words and actions to others deeply matter, especially in the context of our relationship with others. As a man, husband, and Father, do you love like Jesus? Do you see Him in those suffering around you? With the grace of God and some grit, you can love like this!

Prayer

O Jesus, we adore You, we love You, and we thank You for the gift of Your presence. You are the beloved Son of the Father, who in becoming man, became a brother to us. You teach us that sons become brothers, as we learn to have compassion on those who suffer around us. Teach us to live our mission as brothers after Your own heart. We ask you now to hear this prayer.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of God and Mother of us, draw us close to your heart. As you did with Juan Diego, teach us to be your instruments of compassion to others, truly loving our neighbor as ourselves. Please come and fill us with your love.

Amen.

After reading today's reflection, pray the Litany of Restoration of Sonship.

This reflection is an excerpt from the book *Sons in the Son* written by Fr. Innocent Montgomery, CFR, and Fr. Angelus Montgomery, CFR, and produced by the Knights of Columbus Supreme Council. This reflection is to be used for private devotional use only. For more information, please visit kofc.org/sons.