

Accompanying in Conflict and Complicated situations November 22, Next Gathering Tuesday January 17....

“ The Church will have to initiate everyone into this “art of accompaniment” which teaches us to remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the other” . The pace of this accompaniment must be steady and reassuring, reflecting our closeness and our compassionate gaze which also heals, liberates and encourages growth in the Christian life.” *Evangelii Gaudium*.. Pope Francis..

Checking In

Have you felt caught between caring for someone and standing up for Church teaching? Do you worry about members of your family that have no contact or interest in the church anymore? Are there areas of church teaching that leave you confused – or with more questions than answers? How would you rate our church’s response to these complex questions?

Readings Mark 8.19-29

When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you collect?’ They said to him, ‘Twelve.’ ‘And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you collect?’ And they said to him, ‘Seven.’ Then he said to them, ‘Do you not yet understand?’”

In exile – away from the promised land

Pope Francis “perfect families ... do not exist. In those families, no one grows old, there is no sickness, sorrow or death... Consumer propaganda presents a fantasy that has nothing to do with the reality which must daily be faced by the heads of families” (*AL*, 135).

The reality.

Christians today are living a difficult transition between Christendom and our secular multicultural multireligious world leaving many people far from churches , less formed in their faith and more susceptible to surrounding cultural influences. This new world has made us aware of challenging groups Those in irregular marriages Those in non conforming sexual identities - Those in our pews who are not engaged as disciples those with no faith ..

Our traditional Response - some not very healthy approaches clerical direction and lay obedience - tower of babel -in a stronghold besieged by internal and external enemies - Change everything versus Change Nothing!

"accompaniment" can't just restate the teaching *Gaudium and Spes* (Vatican II) evangelical discernment -- *sensus fidei* – **to hear and interpret many voices** to know herself more deeply so ‘that she can understand her identity more penetratingly, express it better, and adjust it more successfully to our times.’

Pope Francis has repeatedly called for creating an open space.

Parrhesia - *Parrhesia* is first of all a characteristic of God's speech. When God speaks his word to us he addresses us fully and completely. The word "parrhesia" refers to a type of relationship between the speaker and what he says. The speaker avoids any form of Rhetoric .. uses most direct words,

2. the parrhesiastes is someone who has the moral qualities which are required, first, to know the truth, and secondly, to convey such truth to others 3.

Someone is said to use parrhesia only if there is a risk or danger for him or her in telling the truth.

4.. the speaker or confessor is in a position of inferiority with respect to the interlocutor.

Conscience and Responsibility

Imputability The moral responsibility for one's human actions. A person is accountable to God only for his or her deliberate actions. " Did you mean to break the window?" **Forgive them**

Father they know not what they are doing. The Lord asked Eve after the sin in the garden: "What is this that you have done?" He asked Cain the same question. The prophet Nathan questioned David in the same way after he committed adultery with the wife of Uriah and had him murdered.

Traditional view of conscience. Versus - Pope Francis " Conscience can do more than recognize that a given situation does not correspond to the overall demands of the Gospel. It can also recognize with sincerity and honesty what for now is the most generous response which can be given to God. The principle of Gradualness Citing John Paul II, Francis puts forward the notion of "graduality," meaning that Catholics may sometimes grow toward adherence or understanding of church teaching throughout their lives. *'Time' invites us to remember, to be enriched, and when necessary, to start all over again. It frees us to become our best selves, to grow wiser..*

Pope Francis on Conflict Conflict cannot be ignored or concealed. It has to be faced. If we remain trapped in conflict, we lose our perspective, our horizons shrink and reality itself begins to fall apart. In this midst of conflict, we lose our sense of the profound unity of reality. one person can perceive another as a challenge, an enemy, or a stranger

How to Defend the Faith without Raising Your Voice:

1. Don't get mad. Reframe.
2. Shed light, not heat.
3. People don't remember what you said as much as how you made them feel.
4. Show, don't tell.
5. Remember to say "Yes."