

AUGUST 16, 2019  
Friday of the 19<sup>th</sup> Week in OT  
Mt. 19: 3-12

### BE FAITHFUL TO THE END

I'm sixteen days old here at St. Peter's, still young and learning. A lot of people are asking me how am I here in my new assignment. I always tell them: I'm ok but deep inside still adjusting, sometimes scared (still sixteen days old remember), but happy and willing to offer myself to serve you, our parishioners of St. Peter's. For my short stay here, I encountered two couples who approached me and asked for a special blessing after mass. I said, of course, I can give you God's blessing and before I can asked them why, one answered with "we are celebrating our golden wedding anniversary" and the other one "we are celebrating fifty five years of bountiful and joy of togetherness." This reminds me of my parents who before years of my priestly ordination, they also had their simple and lovely wedding anniversary. I always treasured couples who always celebrate their wedding anniversary as a reminder that they are together because God love them first and they love each other so much.

In our modern times, many marriages last only for a couple of years. Some people got married and divorced after 8 months. Many relationships collapsed and couple go their separate ways. In our gospel for today, Jesus Christ talks about the importance of marriage: "...and the two shall become one flesh. So, they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate." There are a lot of reasons why marriage lasts for a long time. My only advice: be open to one another, mutual respect, cultivate friendship and camaraderie, love not only the best in him/her but even the worse in him/her, and the ultimate and must not be left behind, put God first, pray and hear mass together.

According to Pope Francis on his address to World Youth Day volunteers at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil last July 28, 2013: "Today, there are those who say that marriage is out of fashion. Is it out of fashion? In a culture of relativism and the ephemeral, many preach the importance of 'enjoying' the moment. They say that it is not worth making a life-long commitment, making a definitive decision, 'forever', because we do not know what tomorrow will bring. I ask you, instead, to be revolutionaries, I ask you to swim against the tide; yes, I am asking you to rebel against this culture that sees everything as temporary and that ultimately believes you are incapable of responsibility, that believes you are incapable of true love. I have confidence in you, and I pray for you." Libreria Editrice Vaticana, World Youth Day volunteers, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil July 28, 2013

Also, Jesus Christ taught us in our gospel today, the importance of following Him in the single blessedness or live a consecrated life who freely renounce marriage life for the sake of the Kingdom of God and follow His way of holiness. It is not an easy path, like marriage, but following the Lord entails sacrifice and renunciation. Whatever is our state of life, we are call called to live our lives to fullest, that is, we belong to God, our lives are not our own, but they belong to God.

My brothers and sisters, let us take the advice of Pope Francis: "God calls you to make definitive choices, and he has a plan for each of you: to discover that plan and to respond to your vocation is to move toward personal fulfilment. God calls each of us to be holy, to live his life, but he has a particular path for each one of us." Libreria Editrice Vaticana, World Youth Day volunteers, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil July 28, 2013

So, live according to God's will, be an instrument of God's love to others. Love your wife, love your husband, love your family. Let us love one another.