

**10 OTB.18;** Gn 3:9-15; 2Cor 4:13-5:1; Mark 3:20-35

Today Jesus is visited by his family, who think that, “***He is out of his mind.***” He is going after outcasts, befriending public sinners, touching lepers, treating those he meets as his equals and eats with them. He is changing the accepted social and religious categories of their lives with his radical and humble compassion.

He is boldly proclaiming a God of infinite Mercy.

When Jesus is informed of his family’s presence in *a vast crowd* surrounding him, he says, “***Who are my mother and my brothers? Looking around at those seated in a circle he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers.***

***Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.***”

Imagine the shock of those in that circle.

Family was everything in his time.

Did he just say we are related at that most intimate level if choose to follow him?

**How is our faith reflecting this reality?**

First, one of my favorite poems: *The Road Not Taken* by Robert Frost.

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
I took the one less traveled by,  
**And that has made all the difference.**

**Our faith rises or falls in our commitment to follow Jesus.** Life is complex and is as *ambiguous* as Frost's *Two Roads*. There are many paths we can follow. And, doubt always travels with us. Faith is not certainty but a combination of wonder,

... awe, humility and mystery. Life is not black and white, but grey.

**2** In the ***Grey Area*** there are question marks and risks. These give meaning to our lives – this is Frost's "*road less travelled*". It requires courage. Taking risks brings insights and a few bruised knees! Risk involves a struggle between Mystery and Doubt. Yet, to discover God's Way of Love it is necessary.

Life is not lived in a china cabinet where fear & caution keep us prisoners.\*

**But, remember that Jesus promised, "to be with us always."** Matthew 28:20

Knowing this, we understand that the Cross is a sign of contradiction. Through Jesus' Life, Passion and Resurrection, Eternity has been opened to us. By Baptism we are called & empowered...*to follow him, to love like him, to engage the world like him.* To choose to follow Jesus...*is to risk the ambiguity and darkness of real life...because it is there that God's blessings will be found* – Jacob, 'leave your familiar home go to a new far away land at 80!'; Mary, 'become the mother of the Messiah before you live with Joseph'; Saul/Paul, 'stop persecuting me & grow in your faith'; and the list never ends. There are no *Three-Easy-Steps to Salvation* as seen on TV at times! Jesus said, "***Come and follow me.***"

This is an invitation to RISK everything. And he means everything!\*

**Maybe he is out of his mind!**

Jesuit theologian *Juan Luis Segundo* said, "The real sin against the Holy Spirit is refusing to recognize, with 'theological joy,' some concrete liberation that is taking place before one's very eyes. In other words, the unforgiveable sin is the refusal to acknowledge that God *is at work* in what gives life, heals or frees human beings.

**And this is where we will find Jesus, and hopefully ourselves, too.**

Building a life based on Jesus may seem like sheer insanity. Why do such a thing?

Isn't life about power, prestige or achievements? At the end of the gospel, Jesus is left with a circle of friends who are inviting more to join in a community, a family.

**They have found joy. They have found the Kingdom.**

Jesus spent his whole life making *the Kingdom of God* available to everyone because

*God wills everyone to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth* 1Tim 2:4. Jesus trusted in the Father and believed in a better future *energized* by the ongoing inspiration of the Spirit. This future is not controlled by the past. He and we can

... bring peace & mercy into the world ... *through us God is at work.*

**Are you and I interested in being disciples, of taking *the road less traveled*?**

Jesus, always the humble Messiah, is ever knocking at the door of our hearts. He will never force entry. Will we open the door? Will we decide to love?

Will we meet evil with good; hate with love; discrimination with welcoming?

**Risky? ... Yes, it is.** (\*Many thoughts from Fr. Brian J. Pierce, O.P. Priest's Retreat 6/2018)

*At this Liturgy of the Road of Jesus, I leave you with this thought. "It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye."*

—Antoine de Saint-Exuprey

**Come let us walk with Jesus ... Be crazy & make a difference!**