

**22 OTB.18;** Dt 4:1-8; James 1:17-27; Mark 7:1-23, *Becoming Saints – Doing the Word!*

**It has been said, “We do not see things as they are,  
... we see things as we are.”** - unk

There is practical and real hope for us. Consider *the Letter of James*,

**“Be doers of the word and not hearers only.”**

James gives us an insightful look at our human nature. He uses an image to help make his point: someone who hears the word but doesn't put it into action, **“is like a man who looks at his own face in a mirror. He sees himself, then goes off and promptly forgets what he looked like.”** (Jas 1:23-24) James is not referring to a poor memory. He is speaking about priorities.

We “forget” Scripture because we have placed other priorities ahead of following our God. **We are talking about our faith and ... our very lives.**

Power lies *in the Word*, but we are called upon to cooperate with *that Word*.

**Faith in Jesus is the way to salvation. We cannot save ourselves.**

At the same time, that faith calls us to action, to do good works. C.S. Lewis once said *“that any discussion about which is more important, faith or works, is as senseless as asking which blade of a pair of scissors is more important. Both are important.”* **Both are critical. Both are necessary.**

**If faith** were not vital, we would have to ask, *“Then why did Jesus die for our sins?”* **If works** were not crucial, we would have to ask, *“Why did Jesus tell us to go out and evangelize, care for the poor, visit the sick, and feed the hungry?”* Faith & works are inseparable. When people asked Jesus,

**“What can we do to accomplish the works of God?”** he answered,

***This is the work of God that you believe in the one he sent”.*** Jn 6:28-29

Even faith in Jesus takes work! It means entrusting ourselves to his love,

his way of living, his future. It means choosing what he chose – sacrifice & mercy: in biblical terms, *to care for orphans and widows and the foreigner.*

Since they had no connection to a household, *the God of Israel* assumed the role of their protector. This teaching is part of *the Torah/Law*. By Jewish tradition, *the Torah*, given to Moses by God, is the pathway to Life. Jesus understood the Torah as *the divine plan* to bring humanity into union with the Father and with each other. *Humanity collaborates with God in the work of on-going creation!* Jesus is that teaching Incarnate and, therefore, by Baptism, so are we. **My friends it's time to BE SOMEBODY!**

**It's time to Be a Believer. It's time to Be a Doer.**

Each one of you has incredible gifts. They were given to you so that you would, with the Spirit, build the Kingdom of Heaven on the face of this Earth today. If you use your talents & your capabilities *for God & for the world* your faith will *come to life and* you will feel purpose and fulfillment!

**2 And that reminds me of a story ....**

A little boy attended a church that had beautiful stained-glass windows. The stained-glass windows, he learned, contained pictures of St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, St. John, Saint Mary Magdalene and many more.

One day his parents asked him, "*What is a saint?*"

**He replied, "A saint is a person the light shines through."**

**That little theologian got it spot on!**

Sainthood is not just for a precious few. We saw this in some of the lives of our own family and friends. Think for a moment of those folks in your

... life who have done amazing sacrificial and unselfish things.

*We are all called to let the light of Christ shine through our lives.* (Phil.1:1).

**How does this happen?**

*Not too long ago ...* There was a young mother who was recently separated and whose day was going badly. She was hot and tired, stressed and lonely, and she

barely had the strength to lift her little boy into his high chair for dinner. She put his food on the tray and began to read the mail, another bill she couldn't pay. It was the last straw.

So she leaned her head against the tray and began to cry.

The little boy looked at his sobbing mother with a sad heart, then took his *pacifier out of his mouth and pressed it gently to her lips. He gave what had!*

Needless to say a bright light shone into that mother's heart and life.

(Source. *Sunday Mornings*, Clark, 22 OTB)

*If an infant can respond, then so can we .... to whomever needs a hug, a helping hand or a major engaging of the community to effect change.*

**Hear what Pope Francis has to say about "us".** "Sanctity is precisely in living with love and offering one's own Christian witness in *everyday affairs*. Be a saint by becoming a visible sign of God's love & presence.

At this point, each one of us can make a little examination of conscience

.... how have I responded up to now to Jesus' call to sanctity?

**Do I want to become a little better, a little more Christian?**

When Jesus invites us to become saints, he doesn't call us to something heavy or sad, quite the contrary! It's an invitation to share in his **joy**, to live and to offer with joy every moment of our life, by making it become at the same time **a gift of love** ... for the people around us." 11/19/14, Gen Aud. (adapted)

**This means that it as simple as this,**

*"Never look down on someone unless you're helping them up."* - unk

***At this Liturgy of Faith Working in the World***, like Pope Francis, let's THINK BIG - loving the world, by our words and deeds, into a better place, a holy place, where all are welcomed and loved.

**Become a real human being & let the Light SHINE !!!**