



Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of Peace

Cathedral of the Honolulu Diocese • Founded 1843 • National Historic Register

Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

September 29, 2024

Beloved Disciples of Christ,

Greetings of peace, love, and joy!

“Being a Friend of Jesus”

John, a disciple of Jesus, approaches His master and asks Him to prevent a person from driving out demons using His name. His fellow disciples agree with this intention because they consider him not to be one of them as a follower of the Lord. He is not a member of the inner circle. Jesus tells them not to prevent him because He considers the person with integrity. He works in His name and does not speak ill of Him. He teaches His disciples that the power to heal and to use His name is shared by many. It is not exclusively for them but for anyone who accepts Him and performs works in His name.

The readings this Sunday depict how God works in this world. In human terms and conditions, one would claim that they have the only right to use the name of Jesus. The disciples are maddened because someone can do good without being part of the inner circle. They consider that driving out demons in the name of Jesus is exclusively for them. It is their property or their right, and they don't want that to be shared or taken away from them. Anyone can invoke the name of Jesus, even those who do not belong to His company. We have but one source of faith and teaching as Christians: Christ Himself. Jesus is reminding us today that the work of salvation is shared by many.

In the modern, secular, and materialistic world we live in, the task of Evangelization is a necessity. The work of Evangelization is not only the task of priests, religious, or catechists but also of everyone who believes in the Lord and is faithful to the creed.

Being Catholic is a great gift and privilege to embrace the teachings of Christ. We have our sets of rites and moral standards. We need all these to keep us on track concerning practicing our religion. Religion is our litmus test of how we can remain faithful to Him. If this is not done, it can be free-flowing; we only want to believe what we want to feel and practice it. This trend of thought leads to accepting relative truths, whereas, in fact, Jesus teaches absolute truths that can bring light and life to any human being and lead to the salvation of souls.

Being a friend of Jesus enables one to focus on His Way, Truth, and Life that He offers to those who believe in Him. Instead of concentrating on who is using Jesus' name, why don't we focus instead of sharing Jesus with the people around us? We can start this at home, at our workplaces, and in our larger community. Maybe, just maybe, people wandering in life and faith may find the Lord and lead better lives through us because we are friends of the Lord.

Your friend in Jesus,

Fr. Pascual