

# 3<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME, YR C

January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010

QUEEN OF PEACE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY  
GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA  
Rev. Jeff McGowan

## 1<sup>ST</sup> READING: 8:2-4A, 5-6, 8-10

Do not be saddened this day, for rejoicing in the Lord must be your strength.

## PSALM 19

Let the words of my mouth and the thought of my heart find favor before you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

## 1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-30

But, as it is, there are many parts, yet one body...If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy.

## LUKE 1:1-4

"Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

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A little boy complained of pain all over. So his concerned mother took him to the pediatrician. The doctor asked, "So where does it hurt, pal?" "I hurt all over," the boy said. "What do you mean all over?" The boy touched his knee with his index finger and cried, "Ow that hurts!!" Then he touched his left cheek and cried again, "Ow that hurts too, doctor!" Then he touched his ear and tears started running down his cheeks, "Even *that* hurts!" The doctor looked him over and told the boy and his mom the diagnosis: "Son, you have a broken finger!" St. Paul has a way with words. He brings the loftiest theology down to earth in this second reading today. If one part of the Body of Christ suffers, all the parts suffer with it.

We say, "oh yeah, I get it, sure that's right! Of course the singer in the choir and the guy in the pew and the people on the altar are all one body." But Paul means much more. Paul means the drug user in prison, the cancer patient in the hospital, the illegal immigrant, the Christian and the pagan, are all one body. Now, that's a bit more of a challenge. We are living in a regressive society. Infantile notions of "this is mine" prevail like a gathering of two year olds. No one wants to take responsibility for them-selves let alone help others. Fear of loss trumps hope of gain. You know of course that King Saul had the best and most loyal of all possible generals. David had the best strategic brain and won victory after victory for his King. But Saul heard some people praise David and got

anxious. He feared David would take the kingdom. So contrary to his own best interest, he went against his own man. Of, course, Saul brought his own downfall. The Sadducees, Scribes and Priests had a good thing going with the Romans. They were comfortable with the status quo. It looked to them like Jesus was likely to shake things up so they crucified him. Thirty-five years later the Romans destroyed Jerusalem anyhow. It had nothing to do with Jesus but it was a result of the people being held back by the ruling elites until they rebelled. This is the kind of thing we have going on in our own society today. We reject our own best interest because we are afraid there may be a cost involved.

Maybe I don't have this right, afterall, the Holy Spirit doesn't necessarily break through my own deafness. But it seem to me that if the Supreme Court can overturn over 100 years of precedents and constitutional law to declare that corporations have the same rights as human beings to buy elections; they can certainly overturn 37 years of precedent from Roe v. Wade and declare the child in the womb has the same rights as all human beings to life. We really are one body; but we are not responsible enough to accept that *everyone* has a right to make their choices, before the pregnancy.

Where you horrified this week as you listened and saw the devastation in Haiti? Queen of Peace parish supports five missions in Haiti with monthly checks and we send medical missions down there twice per year. Up in the mountains, we built and maintain a home for elderly people who would otherwise be living on the streets. They now have a clean shelter, cooked meals, and nurses who visit regularly. We helped build and support a hospital there as well. Within Port au Prince we support an orphanage run by the Missionaries of Charity. Those children are so beautiful and love for us to hold them. We go, hold and hug the children and immediately our hearts are totally theirs. Then we have to leave and that is heartbreaking. We also support another group that built and runs several schools within the slum of Cite Soleil in Port au Prince and we pay the full faculty in one of the schools.

I have been told that the Sisters got all the children safely outside the orphanage but the buildings are just rubble. I don't know about the school. The

home for the elderly and the hospital are okay. The hospital is receiving patients who have come from Port Au Prince. Supplies of all kinds are low now.

This weekend and next weekend we will do something we never do at Queen of Peace. We don't have and don't miss second collections here. Every parish in our diocese is having these second collections for Haiti, but since we already have missions there and know the money goes directly to the front lines with no shortstopping, the Bishop gave us permission to send our offerings directly to the need. I already know you are generous, please write checks to Queen of Peace; put "Haiti" in the memo. We'll record your offering for tax purposes and send the money directly to where it is most needed.

Once when I was visiting, a little girl sat on my lap. One of the women traveling with us had given the children lolly pops. The little girl started to reach up to offer me a lick on her lolly pop. You can imagine what I might be thinking: the germs, possibly tapeworms, who knows what this child might be offering with this lolly pop? I tried to smile and act like I didn't get it. But she kept offering. Finally, I went ahead and licked it. She had nothing but when she received this little lolly pop, she was delighted to share. When it was time to leave, I lifted her off my lap. Everyone laughed as I stood up. My jeans had a big wet circle on the legs. It's not the sort of thing this old bachelor is used to, but I could only laugh with them. Please pray for those children and the good people who could be living comfortably here in the States but work down there for the poor. We can't be there physically, but we are there because of our support.

This what St. Paul was talking about: We are all one body, Christ's Body and Blood. If one part suffers we all suffer. When we become vehicles of God's love, when we become the means for manifesting God's presence in the world, we become sacred and holy as well. God bless you for your goodness and Spirit! That's the Good News!