

Homily of the 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

Dear brothers and sisters,

Today, as Jesus journeys toward Jerusalem, someone comes and asks Him: **“Lord, will only a few people be saved?” Who will be saved? How many? And what must we do?** But Jesus doesn’t give a number. Instead, He gives a command: **“Strive to enter through the narrow gate.”**

The word “strive” in Greek is **agonizomai**, the root of our English word **“agony.”** It suggests **effort, struggle, discipline.** Jesus is telling us that salvation is not automatic, but a committed journey.

The “narrow gate” is **not about exclusion**, it’s **about focus.** It’s the path of **humility, forgiveness, prayer, and love.** It’s the way of the Cross.

Jesus warns that the door will not always remain open. There will come a time when the master of the house will rise and lock the door. Those who delayed, those who assumed they had time, will find themselves outside.

This is not meant to frighten us, it’s meant to wake us up. The time to respond to the call of God is **now.** **Not tomorrow. Not “someday.” Today.**

Some will say, “We knew you, Lord. We were around you.” But Jesus replies, **“I do not know where you are from.”**

This is a warning against any superficial faith. It’s not enough to be near Jesus, we must be with Him, walking in His ways, living His truth.

So, do we know Jesus, or we just know about Him?

Jesus ends with a surprising promise: “People will come from east and west, north and south, and will recline at table in the kingdom of God.” **This means** that salvation is offered to all. **But He also says:** “Some who are last will be first, and some who are first will be last.”

This is a reminder that God’s mercy is wide, but His justice is real. **It’s not our status, our background, or our reputation that saves us, but it’s our response to grace.**

Dear brothers and sisters,

The narrow gate is not about restriction, it’s about refining. It’s the path that leads to life. Let us not delay. Let us not assume. Let us strive, with prayer, with love, with courage, to walk through that gate, and let us rejoice that the invitation is still open. The door is still open. Christ is still calling.

Amen.