In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Why do we come to church week by week? Collectively, there are many answers we might give to that question. All of us in some way or another come seeking—and receiving—a blessing, an encouragement, a challenge, a word of guidance or advice.

The danger is that we then go on our way without entering into a relationship with our Lord; a relationship not just for present need but for all of life.

Saint Paul wrote in Philippians chapter three, “All I want is to know Christ and to experience the power of his resurrection, to share in his sufferings and become like him in his death, in the hope that I myself will be raised from death to life.”

Is that our passion and our goal? Is that what we are here for, and what do when we go out from this place to live out week in week out?

Have you believed to receive a blessing from the Lord? Have you thanked God for that? Do you want to know Our Lord much better? Don’t sneak off as a secret admirer! Come out of the closet, make yourself known to Christ.

Yes, it will mean coming with all of your life. But after all, he gave his life for you. As Paul wrote to the Church at Corinth, “You do not belong to yourselves but to God; he bought you for a price. So use your bodies for God’s glory”.

Knowing God and serving God the two are inseparably linked. We do not truly know God if it doesn’t result in service. And we cannot truly serve God if we do not know Christ and the power of his resurrection. That is the spiritual dynamic which the risen Christ released on his people at Pentecost.
And together as a congregation we need to constantly check our bearings. Are we still on target, still heading straight towards the goal?

Christ’s great commission hasn’t changed. It is still rings clear. “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I will be with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Is that what we are committed to doing? Is that why we might need to expand our facilities? Is that the drive behind efforts to broaden our outreach into the community? Is that behind every decision and action we take here in Grand Ledge in the name of Christ and his Church?

These are important probing questions. We aren’t to do things simply, “Because they have always been done”, nor because “A change for change’s sake would be good.” We are to think and act in response to Christ’s commission, in accordance with his written Word and open to his continued presence in us and with us by the Holy Spirit.

We need to make decisions along the way. We have been given a goal and principles, but not detailed instructions. Our detailed decisions must always relate to our goal.

Today’s gospel reading focuses on Jesus’ ministry in Samaria and Galilee. As Jesus entered the village, 10 lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, they called out, saying, “Jesus, Master, have mercy upon us!” When he saw them, he said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.”

And as they went, they were made clean. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. He prostrated himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him. And, after all, this was a Samaritan.

Then Jesus asked, “Were not 10 made clean?” But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?”

Then he said to him, “Get up and go your way; for your faith has made you well.”

Remember our Lord Jesus Christ who was raised from the dead, a descendent of David. The gospel for which St Paul suffered hardship, and suffered on our Lord’s behalf.

If we have died with him, we will also live with him;
If we endure, we will also reign with him;
If we deny him, he will also deny us;
If we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.

On these words hang all the Law and the Prophets. Heed our Lord and his words from this day forward and for all times.

This is a call to commitment and action. The road ahead will neither be dull nor boring. Our privilege is to know and serve Christ at a time for opportunity and growth. Our Lord has promised to go with us.

Are you ready? If so, then let’s go forward together in the name of Christ!

May the peace of God, which surpasses all human thought and understanding, be with you this day and always.

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