

Second Hand Preacher

29th Sunday Ordinary Time

October 16, 2016

2 Timothy 3:14-4:2

“We Catholics were never encouraged to learn scripture.” I hear that quite often, and while it is true, it doesn’t have to be the case anymore. The Church has embraced Sacred Scripture. We are encouraging people to read the Mass readings ahead of time. We want them to discuss the readings among themselves. This might be a great family or friend activity. Read explanations of the readings to see what others who studied scripture think about the passages for a certain week. One doesn’t have to look too hard to find quality commentaries that can point us in the right direction. Scripture is essential to understanding our faith.

St. Paul told this to Timothy 2,000 years ago. “All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work.” These words show how committed Paul was to scripture. He was a Jewish scholar and that was probably why he felt so strongly about the inspired Word of God being used. Paul wanted Timothy to have sacred scripture come alive to function for the maintenance and growth of the Christian community. The Word of God and the revelation of what Jesus did for us would be the backbone of the early Church.

Paul believed that the whole of the Old Testament pointed to a Messiah. Jesus is that Messiah and we can see this revelation in the Old Testament, all of what would have been known as scripture to Paul. He wouldn’t have dreamed that his letters would be read as scripture as well. He did believe he was inspired by God, but I don’t think he would have seen what would happen centuries later come to fruition in the New Testament. May we continue to ponder the words that Paul wrote so many years ago that highlight the importance of the Old Testament. Both testaments work together to proclaim Jesus as Messiah. We can read them on our own with commentaries or just invest ourselves in the liturgy of the Word each week at Mass. I hope my homilies bring out how we can apply these scriptures to our daily lives.