

Second Hand Preacher

13th Sunday in Ordinary Time

June 26, 2016

Galatians 5:1, 13-16

Freedom is the basis of our faith. We are free to worship and practice our faith in this country. We are in the middle of our Fortnight to Freedom Prayers we are offering to protect our religious liberties. God offers salvation free through Jesus Christ. We are called to respond as part of being a family founded on freedom. Our human family is called to promote freedom so that we can live in harmony.

St. Paul wanted the Galatians to know they were free. They could choose to love and honor God. They could choose to be part of the faith community. I believe there were divisions, but the love of Christ unites us. The second part of the first commandment comes to life. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. Self love is common. We have a natural tendency to protect ourselves and provide for ourselves. What God requires us to do is to give of ourselves. We are called to love the other as much as we love ourselves. This can be a tall task, but we are all called to live this reality. Paul wanted fighting within the community to end, so that love prevails. Paul tells his followers that they no more are bound just by the law, but they are to live in the Spirit.

We are called to be a community of believers that live by the great commandment. Unfortunately, fighting and backbiting are still part of the Church. The Holy Spirit calls us to unity. We have the sacrament of Holy Communion that brings us into the one body. We are free to come and worship and receive the one body and one blood. When we do this, we follow God's will. God's will allows us to treat our neighbors with profound respect, even when they choose to do things differently than us.