

Second Hand Preacher 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time 9 17 17

Romans 14:7-9

What do we live for? For some it might be a day off or a vacation. Some might live for moments with their children or even time to watch their favorite sports team. In this life, we all have priorities. Often times they may be self-centered and some focus on self is very natural. But under stress we may see our true priorities in faith and family. Hopefully at times of great struggle, we can learn to put God first all the time. We can rely on God to help us with our priorities. None of us are perfect in this life, but we work on relationships. Those may be with the people we encounter and more importantly with God.

St. Paul knew of these same struggles. He had people living in Rome who were probably very "me" orientated. They were used to praying to many gods for their own purpose. The accumulation of wealth and earthly power were their goals. Paul is asking them to turn away from this. He wants them to realize they can neither live nor die for themselves. They must live for the Lord who died for them. The Christians in Rome are being challenged to live a new way. They are asked to sacrifice themselves for the good of the other. They are being asked to commit themselves to Jesus in a way that may radically change their lives. They may even have to die like Jesus did.

Consumerism can definitely get in the way of our living and dying for the Lord. I speak not as a lofty preacher from on high, but as a fellow consumer in the muck of how to best use my resources. How can I maintain my basic needs? How can I give to others? Should I have some nice things that give me joy or convenience? Life is all about choices and we are to make them with the paschal mystery in mind. We need to ask ourselves, do we make choices that draw us to Christ? Do we live for Jesus and our fellow human beings? Do we give only to those we love or do we give to all people? I have more questions than answers. I know we need to love God and others. May we each move closer and closer to lives of sacrifice. May we provide for our loved ones and all who are in need. May Jesus always be our true focus, the one we live for.