

Second Hand Preacher

30th Sunday in Ordinary Time

October 26, 2014

1 Thessalonians 1:5c-10

Getting the message out can at times be difficult. We have so many modern ways to do this, but still it can come out sideways. A text doesn't show emotion or much emphasis and Tweets can only be 140 characters long. You can't listen to a voicemail in a noisy crowd and many people think snail mail is just too slooow. While no communication is perfect, face to face is still the best.

St. Paul has good things to say to his Christians in Thessalonica. He believes they are going down the right path as he sees them imitating him and even more importantly, Christ. What I take from the letter is that Paul is impressed with them for sharing the Gospel message with the Christians in Macedonia and Achaia. He praises them for being evangelizers. He lovingly instructs them and praises their goodness.

We are called to be evangelizers as well. Evangelization sounds scary, but it can really be just about sharing our stories. Telling how Jesus makes a difference in our lives. Are we people ruled by fear, sorrow, or mistrust? Do we look at a glass and immediately see it as half empty? Now I'm not trying to be totally Pollyanna, but there is a need for optimism. We should look at suffering as an opportunity for grace. Suffering is hard but if we can surrender it to Christ and use the grace received to evangelize the world. All people need to know the meaning of God's mercy then we will be responding to the preaching of St. Paul.

If we live our lives in order to spread the message, then we will be even more pleasing to God. We will have lived out our baptismal call. We can spread this message at any age, any intelligence level or no matter how demanding our lives are. The message of salvation can be carried with every breath we take. It can be subtle or bold but if we try to live the message of Christ's mercy and salvation, we will be greatly rewarded.