

BRINGING HOME THE GOSPEL

September 26, 2021 • 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Mark 9:38-43

The Importance of Ecumenism

The apostles are upset. They tried to stop a man from driving out demons in Jesus' name because he was not one of Jesus' immediate followers. Jesus tells them not to prevent the man from working miracles. Jesus tells them that no one who was against him would have that kind of power.

The apostles sound a bit cliquish in this Gospel. They seem to be saying that only “card-carrying” Jesus followers are allowed to work miracles in Jesus’ name. Jesus tells them to look at the fruit of the venture, and to remember, “[W]hoever is not against us is for us.” Jesus statement serves well to remind us of the importance of ecumenism in the Catholic mindset.

The Catechism tells us that God is truth and love. Since we were created in the image and likeness of God, these two attributes are essential in our own lives if we wish to follow Jesus. Living one’s life in truth and love is the litmus test for the children of God. If someone is living life honestly, searching for truth and acting in loving ways, she is on the right path. She is walking with God.

I think in today’s world, Jesus would probably tell us to stop being so parochial, so legalistic and tell us to be more ecumenical. God’s plan has always been a universe filled with peace and harmony. All people are called to be one with each other and

one with God. In God’s world there is no place for nit-picking over irrelevant details.

Jesus asks us to look for the good we see in another’s life (the fruits) no matter their religion. Ecumenism means looking for and concentrating on the things we have in common with folks. We need to name and celebrate the things that bring us together and work our way diligently through those issues that separate us.

FAMILY RESPONSE

Have family members discuss what they like best about your parish church. Who are some of your favorite people in the parish?

PERSONAL RESPONSE

What do you like most and least about your parish? How can you help to make your parish better? What do you want to remember from last week? What are you looking forward to next week? What are your concerns?