

21st Sunday In Ordinary Time Of The Year

(Isaiah 66.18-21, Hebrews 12.5-7,11-13, Luke 13.22-30)

Theme: Discipline May Be Painful, But That Is The Only Way To A Good Life.

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ: Through the readings of today, our Lord Jesus Christ invites us to make an effort and enter through the narrow gate. For, this is the gate that leads to everlasting life. The road that leads to suffering and damnation is broad and many are travelling it.

Since we know that, the road to life is so narrow, it is left for us to shape ourselves and leave behind all those things that will make us heavy and overloaded.

The way out or the solution to enter through this narrow gate, that will lead to eternal life, is what the letter to the Hebrews today describes as "*discipline*." We need to discipline our lives in order to be fit to pass through this narrow gate.

We need to examine our lives and through discipline, discover and lay off those bad habits and vices in our lives that will be an obstacle for us in our journey in this world as children of God. These vices and bad habits that may be making it difficult to pass through the narrow gate that leads to eternal life are: Unforgiving heart, immoral life, hatred, love of money and material things, various sins against God and our neighbours, addiction to alcohol and drugs.

We can only come off these sins, vices and bad habits through discipline. We need to say "*no*" to the attraction of these bad habits. It may be painful in our lives, but that is the only way.

The letter to the Hebrews says, "Now, discipline always seems painful rather than pleasant at the time, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it." Just like in the family, if a child is not disciplined, he or she will grow wild and irresponsible. Sometimes as a student, your parents or guardians, as a way of discipline, request you to stay at home and do your readings and assignments. By letting go of the night party or too much playing with your friends or toys, you are being disciplined to be responsible.

Just like when we watch what we eat and drink, it should be the same way in our spiritual life. We need to watch how we behave and what we do or say. We need to say "*yes*" to the gospel message always, even when it is painful in our lives. And we need to say "*no*" to certain desires in our lives!