

JULY 2, 2017



THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



2 KINGS 4:8-11, 14-16A

PSALM 89:2-3, 16-17, 18-19

ROMANS 6:3-4, 8-11

MATTHEW 10:37-42

REFLECTION

What is the proper way to order priorities in our lives? In the crazy hustle and bustle of today's age, we have many people, things, and distractions vying for our attention. So where should we focus our attention in the midst of all of the craziness? Today's Gospel reading is a challenging one. Jesus tells his Apostles that they are not worthy of him if they love others more than him. St. Augustine (AD 354-430) sheds some light on this teaching with a statement that he makes on the very first page of his autobiography, *Confessions*: "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you." Throughout his early life, St. Augustine struggled with this restlessness as he tried to find fulfillment through a whole series of different outlets and vices. Eventually he found his way back to God, experienced conversion, and became one of the great theologians of the early Church. Through his writings and contemplations, he discovered that we humans are innately hardwired for God. But we have the tendency to "wire-in" to other things and other people. In today's reading, Jesus teaches us that we are to seek out rest in God and to place God above everything else. When we do this, all that we do flows out of the loving relationship with our God. Our relationships with parents, siblings, and friends can be that much more fruitful if God is our priority. Part of this total love of God does involve taking up our own crosses. Ultimately, when we take up the cross we lose our life as we once knew it. But this leads us to new life, a new life in Christ.



"PRAYER OF
ST. AUGUSTINE"
ED CONLON

ACTION

Make an "Examination of Priorities" (as opposed to an "Examination of Conscience"). List all of the different things, activities, sports, clubs, people (and so on) that you spend your time and energies on and with. Circle the priorities with which you spend the most time and energy. Where does God fit in on your list of priorities? Reflect upon how you might reorder your priorities so that God is first.

JOURNALING QUESTIONS

● Which of your priorities help lead you to God? Which ones turn you away from him? Reflect upon these and how you might make some changes in your life to truly take up your cross and follow Christ.