

## 15<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR C 2016

“Dad, I want to ask you a question,” said little Josh after his first day of Sunday School.

“Of course,” said his Dad.

“The teacher was reading the Bible, about the Children of Israel building the Temple, the Children of Israel crossing the Red Sea, the Children of Israel making the sacrifices,” said Josh.

“So what’s your question?” his Dad asked.

“Well, didn’t the grown-ups do anything?!”

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In the book entitled **Speaker’s sourcebook** by Glen Van Ekren told this story that during Vietnam War, a soldier Tim called up his mother over the phone: “Hello mom,” the caller said, “I’m back in the States in an early release from my army duties in Vietnam.” “That’s wonderful my son,” his mother replied, “When will you be home?”

Tim said: “That all depends. You see, I would like to bring home a friend with me.” “Sure, bring him home with you for a few days,” she responded. But Tim explained: “Mum, there is something you need to know about my friend. Both legs are amputated, one arm is gone, his face quite disfigured and one ear and eye are missing. He’s not much good to look at, but he needs a home badly.” The mother stammered: “A home? Why do you bring him along for a few days?” “You don’t understand,” the Tim pleaded. “I want to bring him home to live at our house.”

“I think, that is asking a lot, my son,” the mother protested. “I’m sorry about his condition, but what would our friends think? Your father would not agree. I would be embarrassed to have your friend...And...” The phone went dead.

Later that night, the parents returned from their party and found an urgent message to call the police. The mother dialed to the police station and police at the other end said: “We have just found a young man with both legs and one arm missing. His face badly mangled and one eye and ear gone. He shot himself in the head. His identification says he is your son.”

Perhaps we can say that if Tim had honestly told his Mum that the friend he was talking about is none other than himself, definitely she could have agreed to have him to live in their home.

This story would tell us also about our human weakness of being selective and discriminating with our love. We accept and love people as long as they conform to our ways and never let us down.

Mr. Webster said: 'neighbor' means, someone who is near to us, either physically or socially or perhaps in one's affections.

In Jesus time they understood 'neighbour' in a very limited and narrow way.

Essenes of Qumran: Neighbor is the one who shares the same religious persuasion as themselves.

Zealots: Only those who shared the same nationality and ethnicity with them.

Average Jew: understood their neighbor as their fellow Jews, only who are in good standing within the Jewish community and definitely not the Samaritans.

This is about Jesus' time. What about in our time?

In our society today, there are countless victims on the road, from Jerusalem to Jericho, that passes right through our home, parish, school and work place. They suffer from ignorance, disease, violence, blindness, depression, old age, poverty, floods and fire and etc.

Most of them need only a little help coming from us like giving a meal to a hungry person, a good advice, a genuine smile or just a minute or two to hear their stories of struggles in life. This is for what we are called. Friends, this is our duty.

After hearing Jesus' parable with whom do we identify ourselves? Am I the priest in the story or the Levite or the good Samaritan? Or Tim's Mum?

In this parable of 'good Samaritan' Jesus extends the boundaries of our service – even to our enemies. Only when we offer our help, and availability to an unlikely person in such an unexpected way makes us different and a true Christian.