Thirteenth Sunday In Ordinary Time

2 Kings 4:8-11, 14-16

Romans 6:3-4, 8-11

Matthew 10: 37-42

A few weeks ago I was MIA because I went to my 50th reunion from graduating college. I go to reunions every fifty years. It was at the Jesuit College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts – forty miles this side of Boston.

I drove 400 miles in seven hours to get there. No big deal but at my age I had to stop at every rest-stop along the way. When I got to my alma mater I was amazed at all the new buildings- dorms and classrooms and student center and athletic facilities that surrounded all the old buildings I was accustomed to with all the green ivy climbing up the walls. Things change of course. As I was unpacking in the newly refurbished Jesuit faculty residence, I happened to look down at the rug and found a ‘Bobbie pin’. Things change, now I know for sure. When I went there as an undergrad with my pet dinosaur, it was an all-boys school. Now it has been co-ed for decades. Born too early I guess.

My roommate, Bill, drove down from Marshfield, Mass., for the Mass and picnic on Saturday. We grabbed a hot dog and sat around a table under a tree. There were people there from other reunion years, but Bill and I had things to discuss. He told me of his heartache. There were severe medical problems in his family. And he a doctor twice over with a M.D and PhD in pediatric neurology which made him feel doubly at a loss.

The other people at the table fell away. The picnic fell away. The reunion festivities fell away. Time fell away. It was just Bill and I in total sync. I was there for him and he was there with me – in ’being’. Please keep Bill and his family in your prayers.

Today I am interested in ‘being there’ or more precisely “in being’. Thanks to the inroads of Quantum science, time and space are relative terms. ‘Time’ and ‘space’ are tools we use to live out our lives so we don’t miss our dentist’s appointment or we find ourselves in a church in Depew. Tools, however are useful but not the underlining reality we are trying to measure. Sometimes we find ourselves outside of time and space whether we are talking to an old friend or are in deepest prayer. When we lose the use of these tools, we find ourselves in ‘being’ – pure and simple. You’ve been there. You find yourself gazing at the clouds and the earth fades to the background. You find yourself in another world, timeless and filled with wonder – an amazing moment outside of space, outside of time.

Take for example the couple in our first reading. Stand with the woman as she hears the words from the prophet that next year she will be fondling a son. We could use the word that she was ‘awestruck’. I think, she just stood there without questions but full of faith that she would become pregnant. A moment in time but really out of time.

Or the Gospel, “Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.” We probably think this statement has something to do with martyrdom. Maybe it has to do with putting away space and time to be with Jesus in just plain ‘being’.

Or Paul to the Romans,” We were indeed buried with (Christ) through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life.” We quickly think that because we were baptized, we will live with Christ after we die. What if, however, the death by baptism means the shedding of time and space, the death of the tools of time and space. Newness of life would have a totally different meaning. We would be with the Christ whenever or wherever we are because we would have the ability of shedding time and shedding space. No matter what age we are, no matter where we are or what condition we are in, we are one with Christ in ‘being’. We can be at a reunion sitting at a picnic bench in the noonday sun, and it wouldn’t matter. We would be one with another just ‘being’.

Try this. Take some time and just stare at something really hard. You will notice all sorts of things. You will hear all sorts of things. Eventually all these things will fall away and you will float in the joy of ‘being’. Just don’t do it the next time I preach my sermon.