

**Who Are You?** Twenty-second Week in Ordinary Time Wednesday, September 3, 2014  
8:15 AM **1 Cor 3:1-9**; Lk 4:38-44 St. Gregory the Great, pope, doctor (You can't  
utilize the mind of Christ without a lot of his prayer.)

**“While there is jealousy and rivalry among you, are you not of the flesh and walking according to the manner of man?”**

We hear this term “flesh” very often in Scripture, and it doesn't always mean the same thing. Sometimes the term “flesh” refers to mortality, but not here. Here St. Paul is using the word “flesh” in contrast to spirit **to mean the way we perceive ourselves in a way that is out of keeping with the truth of the gospel.** In other words, you could say he's referring to the flesh as a worldly way of looking at life where **each person is in rivalry or competition with every other person**, which is more or less **what the world teaches us.** We grow up in a family and there is sibling rivalry. Where does that come from? People say it comes from nature, but it actually **comes from our perception, not from nature.** And where does our perception come from? It's taught to us, the idea that we are all individuals different from everyone else and competing supposedly for the same thing. In the case of a family supposedly it's parental affection or affirmation or something like that. This is a way psychologists describe this.

But where does it really come from? **It comes from a perception in which who we are is really based upon our bodies, thus the word “flesh.”** So we are bodies. Well, that's not really what we believe. That's not what the gospel says. We are not merely bodies. We have bodies, but **we are really one in the Spirit.** We are one in the Lord. And that's **the meaning of our Baptism. That should be our identity.** We should really think about ourselves like this: **we are part of each other.** If we don't think this way, we are not thinking in the Spirit; we are thinking in the flesh. **The world operates in the flesh.** Everything is all about the

flesh. Laws are all about what individuals do, what they deserve, what they own, what they possess, all about each individual unit. That's the flesh. The same with crime. Who committed this crime? That person, that body, will be in prison, or that body will pay that fine, or something like that. That's the way the world works.

But **in Christ** we should not think that way at all about ourselves. **We are one.** It's made very clear in St. Paul that **we have the mind of Christ.** In other words, **all that Jesus is and has really belongs to us.** "I call you friends, not slaves." Everything he has is ours, including his mind and we are supposed to utilize it. Now **you can't utilize the mind of Christ without a lot of prayer.** It's through prayer that you get in touch with the mind of Christ and, therefore, the unity we have with one another and the meaning of our Baptism and the meaning of the Eucharist. But that meaning is much more important than simply a religious belief. **It should become our identity, how we actually think and feel about ourselves.** Paul's view is if what you are feeling leads to jealousy, which is rivalry, possessiveness: she's mine, he's mine, this is mine, then you are living in the flesh. In other words, your perceptions are all wrong.

Now there are philosophers that say that there is nothing more than perception. Well, that's a little exaggerated. And today we live in a world where everything is what you think it is. Well, that's not quite right either. People who are very subjective or idealistic should occasionally stub their toe and **realize there is something in life besides what you think.** **But, nonetheless, the point is perception is very important, especially perception about yourself: Who are you? Who are you? There is a spiritual answer in the Spirit and there is a fleshly answer.** They are not the same.