

Letting God Be First Fifteenth Week in Ordinary Time Monday, July 17, 2017
8:15 AM Ex 1:8-14, 22; **Mt 10:34—11:1** (Jesus identifies with us.)

“Do not think that I have come to bring peace upon earth. I have come to bring not peace but the sword.”

Now this opening statement is rather shocking; it’s supposed to alert people to something very important being said. Of course here the sword being referred to is not the type of sword that is in a scabbard. He is not recommending killing your father or your mother, but he is saying that **there has to be a sword of discrimination to separate. This discrimination is absolutely essential for a disciple.**

We have to put God first, which is one of the most difficult things to learn. Actually how do we do this? It’s not actually a task to be done. **It’s something we have to let happen.** As in so many things in regard to God and grace and faith and the gifts, they come to us as gift. God enables us to be changed. And here are some ways in which we are changed. We recognize that father and mother are really important, but they are not the most important people in our lives, nor are our daughters or sons, nor is our very life the most important thing because **“whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”** So if we can imagine what it is like to lose our lives for Jesus’ sake, it’s something that happens to us. **We have to give up resisting, and then we will find what we are born for.**

Meanwhile, **Jesus identifies with us.** This is already **a hint at what Baptism is about.** **“Whoever receives you receives me.”** Jesus is identifying with his followers, with the members of his community, with his Church, if you will. Baptism really makes us one with him in this way that **whatever happens to us happens to him.** Some of the saints say that he will continue to suffer until the end of time; that’s a way of putting it because we suffer until the end of time, although actually Christ is no longer in time. So Jesus really wants to challenge us and to get us to **be more aware of him** and to let all else be.