

15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Today's readings guide us to reflect on where God's Word truly lives - not far away in the skies, not across the sea, but in our mouth, in our heart, and in our hands. These three places - mouth, heart, and hand - reveal whether God's Word has taken root in our life.

1. The Word Is Near You

In the first reading, Moses tells the Israelites: "This commandment is not beyond your reach... It is very near to you, in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it." (Deut 30:14).

God's command is not complicated. It is not hidden. It is close - something we can speak with our mouth, believe with our heart, and do with our hands.

The mouth represents devotion - our praise, our prayer, our confession. The heart represents understanding - where truth is believed and treasured. The hand represents action - love shown in deeds. Moses says: knowing God's will is not enough; doing God's will is where life begins.

2. The Good Samaritan – The Gospel in Action

The Gospel (Luke 10:25–37) tells the well-known parable of the Good Samaritan. It starts with a lawyer asking Jesus, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" - a good question. Jesus turns the question back: "What do you read in the Law?" The man answers correctly: "Love God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind - and love your neighbor as yourself."

Jesus replies: "Do this, and you will live." But the man, still unsure, asks: "And who is my neighbor?" That's when Jesus tells the story of the man beaten on the road to Jericho. A priest sees him - and walks away. A Levite sees him - and walks away. A Samaritan, whom Jews normally despised, stops, cares, and acts with compassion.

Jesus asks: "Who proved to be a neighbor?" The lawyer doesn't even say "the Samaritan" (perhaps out of prejudice) but says: "The one who showed mercy." Jesus

responds: “Go and do likewise.” Faith is not just about what we say or what we feel. It is shown by what we do.

3. From Mouth and Heart to Hands

The priest and Levite likely had the Word of God in their mouth and perhaps even in their hearts - but it never reached their hands. The Samaritan, though an outsider, let compassion overflow into action. Jesus is clear: eternal life is not gained through knowledge alone, but through love lived.

In Jewish tradition, it was believed that studying the Law was higher than doing it. But Jesus teaches that doing is the true mark of understanding. Let us ask ourselves today: Is my faith only on my lips? Is it buried silently in my heart? Or is it flowing through my hands to others?

Saint Paul tells us in the second reading (Col 1:15–20) that Christ is the image of the invisible God - the One in whom all things were created, and through whom all things are reconciled. Jesus is not a distant God. He is near. He became flesh. He touched the sick, lifted the fallen, embraced the outcast.

In Christ, God’s love moved from heaven to earth, from word to action, from heart to cross. He did not stay far. He came near—to our mouths (His words), to our hearts (His love), and to our hands (His healing).

Eternal life is not just about believing in God. It is about becoming like God especially in how we treat those who suffer. The man lying on the road is close to us - closer than we think. He may not have a name, a religion, or a title but he has a need. And that need calls us to respond not with silence, but with service.

Today, Jesus asks not “What do you know?”, but “What will you do?” Will It Stay in the Mouth or Reach the Hands? Let us not be satisfied with just knowing the Law or just feeling love in our hearts. Let us stretch out our hands to bind wounds, to carry the broken, to share what we have. Eternal life does not begin after death. It begins here and now when we live a life of love that speaks, believes, and acts.