

IN THE FAMILY OF A MERCIFUL FATHER: TUESDAY, 19TH JULY, 2022, WEEK 16, YEAR II.

MICAH 7:14-15, 18-20; PSALM 85; MATTHEW 12:46-50

In the First Reading of today, the Prophet Micah offers a prayer of forgiveness to God, asking the Lord to show mercy to His people and forgive their rebellion. His prayer reminds us of the nature of God.

God is a loving Father, who delights in forgiving and wiping out the record of our sins. He throws sins into the bottom of the sea and He doesn't go back there to fish them out. He is a God who delights in showing mercy. His anger is momentary. He pardons crimes, and takes fault away.

There are two messages from here:

A. We must never feel or live as if condemned or give up on ourselves when we feel we have failed or disappointed God. He is never tired of showing mercy and giving grace, if we do not get tired of asking for it. He doesn't want anyone to despair of His mercy. If anyone is condemned, it is not because God was not merciful enough or the sin was unforgivable. It will be because they did not sincerely ask for mercy or they took mercy for granted.

B. In the Gospel of today, Jesus tells us that His family members are not just those related to Him by blood but those who do the will of His Father. In this sense, Mary is related to Jesus in both ways - she gave birth to Him and she is a perfect example of a life dedicated to doing God's will.

We must also be related to Jesus in more than one way. Our membership of God's family must fulfil these three requirements:

1. Sacramental Baptism which unites us to Christ, His Church and one another.
2. Obedience to God's will, which unites us to Christ as the model of perfect obedience.
3. Resemblance of the Father, especially in His attributes of love, faithfulness, forgiveness and patience. This resemblance unites us to the Father and it is brought about through the operation of the Holy Spirit.

Let us pray that we may obtain mercy for our sins and that we may be careful to live in obedience to God and in imitation of His mercy and love.