

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR A
THEME: **“COME TO ME... SHOULDER MY YOKE”**

Human nature is such that people always want to take the easy way out, if they can find it. If people can just make money, a lot of it, without working for it, they will be very happy. That is the reason behind all the dishonesty, fraud, outright theft that we find in every society all over the world.

A lot of people seem to be prepared to achieve the proverbial breakthrough, without breaking any sweat, success with minimal effort. What is even more mystifying is that some people believe they can achieve salvation merely by wishing it, or as they like to deceive themselves, merely by believing strongly that they have it already, no matter what kind of life they are living.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, all these fly in the face of the teachings of Jesus Christ. His teaching is that people must deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow him (Matt. 16:24). In other words, there is no free lunch in Christianity; no easy road to salvation. Indeed, no easy road to any good thing. That is what Jesus means by asking his disciples to shoulder his yoke, as we read in our Gospel reading today.

A lot of people find the teachings of Jesus to be tough and demanding. True enough, Christianity is a tough and demanding religion. It calls for self-denial and a great deal of personal sacrifice. Many people are not prepared to make such sacrifice. They would rather sidetrack the demands of Christianity and try to make it some other way, outside the structures of Christianity. They will lie, cheat, and defraud. They will seek out ministers, prophets and self-styled “men of God” who promise success without sweat. Christianity without the cross.

My dear friends in Christ, the truth that we may not discover, is that the demands of Christianity are not, after all, as tough as those of the other masters that some people have taken upon themselves. Christianity is far more liberating than they thought it was enslaving. It is the other things that people have subjected themselves to that are truly enslaving. And Christianity- true and authentic Christianity- is there to free us from enslavement, if, but only if we are prepared to take on the yoke of Jesus that it entails. It is only in Christianity that we can find real and abiding rest for our souls as Jesus promises in today's Gospel passage.

There is a saying that: “If you think education is expensive, try ignorance.” We may borrow a leaf from that, and say, “If you think Christianity is hard, try living without it.”