

A Bible Bullet (aimed at the heart)

Sixth Sunday of Easter, Cycle B

Acts 10:25-26, 34-35,44-48; 1John 4:7-10; John 15:9-17

As every school year draws to a close I find myself confronted and convicted by one simple verse of the Gospel for Sunday:

It was not you who chose me, it was I who chose you to go forth and bear fruit. Your fruit must endure...v.16

I cannot tell you why certain verses of the Scriptures will suddenly have meaning when they have been read many times before without the same impact. Perhaps a contributing factor is the end of another academic year. I must ask myself if my “fruit” with these children will endure. I sought other translations of the same text and found these:

It was not you who chose me, it was I who appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain...(Revised New Testament, NAB)

You didn't choose me! I chose you! I appointed you to go and produce lovely fruit always...(The Living Bible)

You didn't choose me, I chose you; and I ordained that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruits should remain...
(The Unvarnished Gospels)

None of these lessened the burden of this reading. Instead, each made the command more imperative. The scope goes far beyond the parameters of the teaching profession. It really asks of you and me what fruit we bore in all our relationships. What steps have we taken to deepen our spiritual lives? What have we taught in wordless ways by our examples? Does the faith by which we live inspire faith in others? Have we searched for the Truth with fervor that motivates others to do the same?

We have been chosen, appointed and ordained to bear fruit that will last. You and I won't be around this world forever, but something that we produce will remain. This reading reminds us that it is always time to evaluate our fruit.

The children are hybrids of all the fruitfulness to which they are exposed. If they are filled with the vulgar, selfish ways of the world, the rank disrespect of others for the sake of humor, that is the fruit they will yield. These children are amazing little sponges who receive all the messages that are sent their way. The Book of Proverbs tells us:

Raise up a child in the way he must go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

Each child has been chosen by God to fulfill a role in salvation which cannot be fulfilled by another. If they are misdirected by us or fail to receive the guidance from us that they need to become all that they are called to be, their mission may be forever unfulfilled. We truly are co-creators with the Father.

“It was I who chose you to go forth and bear fruit.”