

14<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)  
July 6, 2025  
“Three Cs of Christianity”

You are all familiar with the three Rs of education, reading, writing, and arithmetic, but do you know the three Cs of Christianity? They are found in today’s readings.

The first C is **calling**, or vocation. Like Moses, who sent men to reconnoiter the land of Canaan before Israel settled there (Num. 13), Jesus sent 72 disciples ahead of him to the places he would visit.

The purpose of their mission was to scout the land, check things out, preach, heal, and announce “*The kingdom of God is at hand for you*” (10:9).

Unlike any other religious leader (Buddha, Confucius, Mohammed), Our Lord was pre-announced. Long before he arrived, God told people he was coming. That makes Jesus different from all other religious leaders in history. Centuries before he came on the scene, no one announced, “Mohammed is coming.” But the prophets announced Jesus the Messiah was coming, and now he prepares others for his coming through the 72 disciples.

Each of us has a vocation, a calling: to marriage, priesthood, consecrated life, or lay vocation. And within that calling is a mission to do God’s work. The Archdiocese of Dubuque has announced our mission: “Empowered by the Holy Spirit through prayer, sacraments, and Scripture, we are to share the Gospel of Jesus,” mindful of Paul’s words: “*Paul plants, Apollos waters, but God provides the growth*” (1 Cor. 3:6). The meetings we will attend this fall are part of that mission.

In order to fulfill our God-given mission, we have to follow the inner compass God provides. This past Thursday was the feast of Saint Thomas the Apostle. Thomas, like Jesus, was a carpenter by trade. He spent his days making houses, furniture, yokes for oxen, tools, ships, oars, masts, and balances. While preaching in India, he was commissioned by a high ruler there to build a palace, and given substantial funds to do so. Instead of working on the building, Thomas traveled the area, giving money to the poor, healing the sick, and proclaiming the “New God.” When the leader heard about this, he summoned Thomas and asked about the

palace. Thomas replied “yes, he was working on it.” When the leader asked to see the work, Thomas replied, “You cannot see it now, but when you depart this life, you shall see it.” Thomas built spiritual palaces with the good works he did on earth. That’s our call as well.

At the end of our life, we will be judged by how faithful we were to the mission God gave us of announcing his Word and living our faith. We have to be alert and pray for opportunities to fulfill our mission in our corner of God’s creation.

The second C is **cross**. The cross is any burden that troubles us. It could be a financial debt, a sudden illness or disease, a family fracture, a mental illness, an unconfessed sin that troubles the conscience, or a serious decision ahead. Our call is to embrace the cross, knowing that after the cross is resurrection. Venerable Sheen said often, “There is no Easter Sunday without a Good Friday. You cannot wear a halo of glory without first wearing the crown of thorns.”

Saint Paul boasts of the Cross to the Galatians. “The world” or worldly concerns died to him and he died to the concerns of the world with his conversion and baptism. He bore physical, emotional, and spiritual scars on his person as a result of whippings, stonings, and other persecutions.

Saints Francis, Rita, and Padre Pio bore physical crosses or marks on their bodies; while we do not have those physical marks, we are called to carry invisible marks on our bodies with confidence in the power and mercy of God who redeems us through them.

The third C is **comfort**. God is not a torturer or sadistic Father. While he calls us to bear a cross, he also provides the comfort of grace and peace. The prophet Isaiah portrays Jerusalem, which was destroyed by the Babylonian enemy, as a tender mother who nurtures her children. Those children who were faithful would see Jerusalem rebuilt and renewed. God provides grace, or the power of his love, for those who bear the crosses of life. That’s what makes the Lord’s yoke “light” and his burden “easy.” Inner peace, a clear conscience, and hope of heaven make the burdens of life light and even sweet.

Those are the three Cs: let’s embrace them on path of Christian perfection.