

Seventeenth Sunday Ordinary Time – C – 2019
Gen 18.20-32///Col.2.12-14///Luke 11.1-13

→I think it is safe to say that ...perhaps...one thing perhaps we all have in common----is that we like a bargain

→ this coming week...the Women's Guild will hold its annual rummage sale....I have joked that is nothing but a big junk sale **but** someone's trash can certainly become another's treasure....and if this week is anything like last year, someone's trash will produce close to \$5000.00 in treasures....my point is that it is hard for any of us to pass up a deal...a bargain

→AND there is probably nothing more satisfying than to come away with the feeling as if we got something for less than its worth ----- after all, that is what a bargain is...you give something and get something MORE in return

→and if we are like most people, we will bargain///haggle///wheel and deal for almost anything

→and that seems to be the common theme of our readings today...in particular the gospel reading from Luke and our first reading from Genesis

PAUSE

→today in the gospel reading...Jesus teaches his disciples about prayer...and not only about prayer...but he bestows to us the most famous, common, well-known prayer in the history of the human race....

→however upon a closer look at both the Gospel reading and the first reading from Genesis...the common theme of these passages is that they are based on our covenant...our agreement with God

→ask and you will receive....seek and you will find...knock and the door will be opened

→in more common terms...these readings are really about making a bargain with God...

→many times...////...very often....we will attempt to strike little bargains with God

→and, this is not only true of you and me ...but we also have evidence of it in today's readings....all the way back to the Old Testament

→in the first reading today.....Abraham is probably one of the best examples of persistent bargaining.....as we heard in the first reading.....he doesn't know when to give up AND bargains the Lord down to 10 people.

→and in the gospel, disciples ask Jesus to teach them how to pray...they, in effect, strike a bargain with Christ

→and the bargain is that....if they are taught how to pray....they will indeed pray...

--////--so Jesus answers their request with some of the most universal words known to human beings...he teaches them to pray the Our Father

→have you ever thought closely about what we say when we say the Our Father

→have you ever thought about what we commit ourselves too each time we say those familiar words

→because if we look more closely.....we see that the Our Father is a prayer filled with bargains.....bargains.....between us and God

→we pray: “hallowed be your name” --->in other words...yes...your name is holy...it is to be glorified...it deserves our reverence...and our respect

→AND YOUR NAME RECEIVES the glory it deserves....when I give it glory.....through my words and actions here on earth among all your people....i.o.w....a bargain between us and God

-----→we also pray: “your kingdom come”....let your kingdom come here on earth, the kingdom that I...as a member of your Body.... need to help bring about by the way I treat others, by the way I am with others, by my works and words of charity and kindness.....another bargain

-----→ we pray: “give us this day our daily bread,”....we ask for nourishment so that we can extend ourselves to others...to be present and responsive to them.....i.o.w. give me food...so I can better serve others [another bargain]

-----→and next we say the most explicit of all bargains in the prayer: “forgive us our sins as we forgive all who do us wrong” ----i.o.w. forgive me Lord of all MY sins so that I can learn to forgive all those who hurt me

-----→and finally: “lead US not into temptation, but deliver US from all evil”....i.o.w. do not allow me to be tempted...so that I will not tempt others

→so you see, the OUR FATHER, a prayer that we say daily....a prayer that we sometimes say without even thinking...our most common and universal prayer.... Is really filled with bargains

→bargains that perhaps we never thought about...BUT ONES WE MAKE EACH TIME WE SAY THAT PRAYER/////AND ONES THAT WE ARE EXPECTED TO LIVE UP TO

PAUSE

→in today's 1st reading Abraham struck a bargain with God to save SODOM/GOMORRAH, and as the reading ends...it appears as if he has won

→however.....as the story goes on...we learn that Abraham was really bargaining with the Lord to save his nephew LOT, and in fact there weren't even 10 righteous people and those cities were eventually destroyed

→/////perhaps we might need to caution ourselves as well

→because we strike a variety of bargains w/God, OUR FATHER every time we pray that most universal prayer of all

--we bargain: to glorify///to share with one another///to forgive///to be just and to be righteous

→and these are bargains we are expected to live up to

PAUSE

→it is with courage that we say the words of the OUR FATHERbut in reality we really don't need courage to **say** the words...we need the courage to **live** up to the bargains...the covenant...the agreement that we commit ourselves too

→the OUR FATHER is the most recognized prayer among people today

--but when you look at it more closely...and truly understand it...it is also the most demanding.....

→we pray it often....often without even thinking...realizing....or...understanding what we are saying.....

→but each time we say it...we make a bargain, a commitment...an agreement with God....

→and in reality....those words really don't mean a thing....if WE don't live up to our end of the deal [bargain]