

# Fear of commitment crippling

**21st Sunday in Ordinary Time (Aug. 24): (R3) John 6:60-69; (R1) Joshua 24:1-2, 15-18; (R2) Ephesians 5:21-32.**

Many of the people who had followed Jesus were drifting away. His message was too radical, his demands too great. So Jesus turned to The Twelve and asked, "Do you want to leave me too?" Simon Peter answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe; we are convinced that you are God's holy one."

Peter hit the nail squarely on the head: "You have the words of eternal life." Make no mistake — this is why hundreds of millions of people of every nationality, race and color bow at the name of Jesus.

As we get older we start seeing changes in the world around us. Friends die. Neighborhoods die. Even an entire way of life can die. In a dying and decadent world, Jesus reminds us that there is something more, something of infinitely greater worth that awaits all who trust in him. He has wonderful words of life.

His words remind us that even the smallest person's life can have a great impact on the world. The greatest heresy of which you and I can be guilty is not a lack of faith in God. It is a lack of faith in ourselves and what God can do through us. Even the smallest person in the kingdom of God is of infinite value. Even the person with the most severe limitations can impact others. Jesus tells us that our lives matter.

How we feel about ourselves will determine the effectiveness of our witness to Christ. Too many people are disgusted with themselves, their self-esteem is dragging. Let Christ deliver you from feelings of low self-esteem. He speaks words of life about who you are and what he has done on your behalf.



Father **Albert Shamon**

## A word for Sunday

When we feel good, we tend to do good. Many people identify themselves with Christ's ministry, but they never reach out to others. Why? It is because Christ's spirit, Christ's acceptance, Christ's empowerment has never penetrated their hearts.

The disciples knew they could never leave Jesus. They had the freedom to do so, but they would never have the desire to do so. Because, in him, they had found life. They felt good about themselves in his presence, so they could feel good about others. They felt his love so they could be loving. Simon Peter answered for the rest.

How do you feel about yourself? Some of us feel like sinners — and we are, but he has taken away our sins. Some of us feel inadequate, but we do not take comfort in our completeness. Some of us feel resentful. We wonder why life has not been more fulfilling. We wonder why we do not experience his good-

ness in our lives. Could it be that we have not opened ourselves completely to him? Could it be that we have not completely listened to the words he would say to us? Could it be that our spiritual and emotional lethargy is a result of our fear of total commitment to his purpose for our lives?

Our lives lack spiritual vitality. They lack joy, they lack life. I believe the reason is fear — fear of total commitment to Christ and a refusal to hear and believe his wonderful words of life.

We all need to think of eternity. That is why today we must spend time with Jesus. Only he has the wonderful words of eternal life.

Father Shamon is administrator of St. Isaac Jogues Chapel, Fleming.

## Daily Readings

**Monday, August 25**

1 Thessalonians 1:1-5, 8B-10; Psalms 149:1-6, 9; Matthew 23:13-22

**Tuesday, August 26**

1 Thessalonians 2:1-8; Psalms 139:1-3, 4-6; Matthew 23:23-26

**Wednesday, August 27**

1 Thessalonians 2:9-13; Psalms 139:7-12; Matthew 23:27-32

**Thursday, August 28**

1 Thessalonians 3:7-13; Psalms 90:3-4, 12-14, 17; Matthew 24:42-51

**Friday, August 29**

1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Psalms 97:1-2, 5-6, 10-12; Mark 6:17-29

**Saturday, August 30**

1 Thessalonians 4:9-11; Psalms 98:1, 7-9; Matthew 25:14-30

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