

Thoughts on the Daily Word

23rd Week of the Year. *Thursday 12th September. Readings: 1 Corinthians 8:1-7,11-13; Psalm: 138; Gospel: Luke 6:27-38.*

At the heart of the Gospel is the invitation to freedom. Not the freedom to do just what we want but a real freedom of the heart to choose that which is best. For some that means more knowledge, for knowledge does help us in the journey into freedom. Paul, however, places that knowledge in its rightful place as a help toward true freedom but not that freedom in itself. He places love, the power of the spirit, in the central place that empowers us to choose correctly. Jesus, in Luke's Sermon on the Plain, outlines the true way to freedom, a compassionate heart. Remembering that in the Scriptures the heart is not just the seat of emotions but decisions, the place where the spirit moves and chooses that which is right and true. To the Corinthians, who are struggling with decisions on how to live this new-fangled Christian life, Paul takes one of the challenges about food offered to idols. Essentially the question is not about idols, which don't really exist, but about how we deal with our brothers and sisters, many of whom are poor and need food wherever it can be found, even in the temples of idols where animals were slaughtered. Those who are struggling need our compassion but also those who don't understand our freedom need to be helped and not laughed at for being weak in understanding. It is the Sermon in practice.