

► Sunday, August 31, 2008, Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time

*Jer 20:7-9; Ps 63:2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9; Rom 12:1-2; Mt 16:21-27*

Week #2: Main theme: True freedom is the freedom to do the good.

“Do not conform yourself to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect.”

As Paul says in the letter to the Romans, we must allow God’s wise and loving will to transform our thinking, so that we do not think like the dominant culture but like God. We live in a culture of death, in which God’s truth about sexuality, marriage, and life is obscured by self-interest and the selfish pursuit of pleasure. This is why the Church’s teaching on morals is so countercultural. But God’s will for us is a law of life, which frees us to be truly happy. Freedom is not the ability to do whatever we please, acting out of emotion rather than out of intelligence; that is actually slavery to our desires. Freedom is being free enough to give ourselves away, even when it is hard. As Jesus tells us, pursuing God’s will involves carrying our cross and dying to our selfish desires, in order to arise with him to new life forever. It is only by Christ’s self-sacrificial love, poured out for us in the Eucharist that will soon be made present on this altar, that we are able to love perfectly. It transforms us completely, so that we are able to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice for true love.

**Bulletin: “*The human being is made for love and cannot live without love. When it is manifested as the total gift of two persons in their complementarities, love cannot be reduced to emotions or feelings, much less to mere sexual expression. ... The truth of conjugal love and sexuality exist where there is a full and total gift of persons, with the characteristics of unity and fidelity...*”**  
*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, #223*