

FR. TK. REFLECTIONS 22nd SUNDAY YEAR-B-2024:

PURIFICATION AND REACHING OUT TO OUR NEIGHBOUR:

Every nation, State, community, village and tribe has tradition or culture. We are surrounded by traditions. Meaning of every human life, family, and community is transmitted through culture and traditions. Our lives are wrapped up in these traditions and unless we capture the culture of a particular place and people we stand to lose a lot. After so many years in America, I am still learning the culture otherwise the cultural shock is still inevitable.

Christianity to thrive in place it must address the culture of the people otherwise it won't reach to them as such you find that unless one has a solution in Christianity he/she would seek for solution and meaning in the culture. It is not a surprise in some African communities they have double standard of worship. Sundays they are Christian and night they are great visitors of medicine wise traditional people to get the solutions.

We have different traditions in different communities like in weddings, funerals, birthdays, Christmas/Easter, Lent, thanksgiving celebrations. Political, schools, parish traditions. These help to keep balance and people adhere in **unity, peace, understanding, love and stability in the community**. They are the **GPS of the community locating where to go in life!**

In our first reading (Deut 4:1-2, 6-8) takes us back to the time of Moses, he knew he would die before entering the promised land, hence he gives the Israelite some last minutes instructions before crossing Jordan. He is telling them **God loves them and he want them to prosper, they will do so if they keep Gods laws**. what

a advise for us even during this century.We are called to **obey Gods commandment** in keeping our traditions,culture and there shouldn't be any conflict.If anything they should compliment each other.Traditions and culture should means of **deepening, strengthening,renewing,expressing and sustaining our worship thus bringing us closer to our maker as a whole person.**How is our worship this Sunday!Are we present wholeheartly body,spirit and mind?.This is what St.James is telling us (James 1:17-18,21,22,27) he is challenging us not only to **be hearers but also doers** of worship reaching out to others too especially the **poor,orphans widows,refugees,jobless,homeless and those suffering in one way or another,this is minding about the whole person.**

In the gospel(Mk 7:1-8,14-15,21-23) as soon as we start reading,we sense confrontation between Jesus and Jewish leaders.The law keepers and custodians of the Jewish laws (present day lawyers constitutional interpreter's,attorneys and church canonists).The scribes had more than the Ten Commandments,coupled by traditions and interpretations of the laws which are spread in the five first five books of the Bible(The Pentateuch).They allowed their tradition over rule Gods Laws and this is the reason they had conflict with Jesus.They insisted on the external manifestations rather than the interior person.Jesus insisted on the interior **cleansing first.*nothing outside a person can enter and make a person unclean,rather the things comes out makes a person unclean***.This is what makes God to be unhappy with us that which comes from within like,**malice.murder.theft.adultery,malice,pride envy and wickedness.**Let us not forget we have a God who's is

concerned with the way we **live, the way we treat others and the respect and love for him.** let's us not let our culture and traditions determine what is morally right or wrong in conflicts with what God has spoken. we must be very careful of **moral pollution in our present society and the world** which is getting worse and out of control more than the environmental pollution, **it is the high time we take care of moral spiritual pollutions.** We need urgent grace of God to purify both the external and internal self.

(Be careful to do as the lord your Gods has commanded you...that you may live and prosper and may have long life in the land which you posses(Exodus 5,32-33)