

ROGATION 2015
SERMON – SAINT JOSEPH PARISH
FATHER JOHN ALTBERG
JAMES 1.22 JOHN 16.23



YOU CANNOT DO THIS ALL ON YOUR OWN...ASK FOR HELP...YOU ARE GOING TO BE SENT IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS...I WILL NOT BE HERE TO GUIDE EACH OF YOUR STEPS, SAID JESUS...REMEMBER ALWAYS...YOU WILL BE NEITHER ALONE NOR FORGOTTEN. TELL MY FATHER I SAID TO ASK...HE WILL HELP. THIS WEEK WE TAKE THIS TO HEART...**ASKING GOD FOR HELP...**

This is the final Sunday of the Easter Season...Ascension Day is this Thursday. Today is also Mother's Day...hopefully my fellow men knew that before this moment! Today is also Rogation Day...depending on the Easter cycle, Rogation Day and Mother's Day sometimes fall on the same Sunday. I have told you before of my struggle to connect Mother's Day and Rogation...alas, there is no new news this year!

That said, I take license and connect them anyway...Rogation is about growth...there's perhaps no one more responsible for our own growth than our mothers. It takes little recollection to identify the key role in the life of Jesus by BVM...

ROGATION – not an everyday conversational word, derives from the Latin, *rogare*...meaning, "ASK." Rogation Day is often regarded as one of those "historic days"...once, but no longer relevant in this age of frozen, preserved or designer foods...regarded as just for farmers in earlier times.

Rogation...the curious term not often identified and about which little is said...a day once held essential in the life of the Church - now less emphasized as our society has become less agrarian. Yes...one can make a case for a clever marketing type coming up with *Rogaine*, the alleged magical hair grower as a derivative of the Latin word...sort of 'personal agriculture'...!

On this Sunday before Ascension, we hear in the Gospel final instructions from Jesus...he told his disciples, I am going away, but don't let that be a problem...you can always ask my dad. This is what I came here to do...to show you a way, to provide help because you cannot find everything on your own.

In the Epistle...St. James provides profound counsel...Do not deceive yourself by only **listening** to what Jesus has to say; you must put it into practice. The person who doesn't take action on what Jesus said is analogous to looking in a mirror and then wondering a few minutes later who was there...

Think about the important needs in your life and the life of the Church, the world and the community. Carefully consider the priorities and ask God for help. Too often we ignore the ultimate source of all help...that leads us to forget to ask.

A less academic analysis takes us back to the same problem that beset Jesus...people simply did not believe he was for real...that included lingering doubts defined amongst the disciples by today's Gospel

Jesus told his followers...sometimes I used figures of speech to explain to you who I am...you did not comprehend. The day WILL come when the message will be very plainly presented ...you will get it then.

Place yourself in that discussion...eyes dart quickly side to side..."Now, Jesus, you are speaking plainly...you are not using figures of speech...we know you know everything...we believe you have come from God..."

This was a watershed moment of awareness for the disciples...they had, in 'modernspeak', connected the dots...

While Rogation was most commonly connected with agriculture...it's incorrect to conclude it is an exclusive connection!

It's time to dispose of that bias...it's TIME to ask broadly for help!

ROGATION...asking...applies across a much-expanded spectrum. Consider carefully the priorities of **OUR** time and **ASK GOD** for help. Too often we ignore the ultimate source of all help...that leads us to indifference, worse yet, despair.

Jesus left comforting instructions...*I AM GOING TO GO AWAY SOON, BUT YOU ARE NEVER ALONE...YOU CANNOT DO THIS ALL ON YOUR OWN...ASK MY FATHER FOR HELP.*

