

DEACON TONY'S HOMILY
for the
22ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE NATURE OF TRUE RELIGION

Our first reading from Deuteronomy begins with Moses giving the people instructions on the statutes sent down from God. If you obey these statutes, you will be able to enter and take possession of the promised land.

NOTE HOW HE WARNS THEM NOT TO ADD OR SUBTRACT FROM THE COMMANDS

If they follow the commands of God carefully, they will show the world their wisdom and intelligence. But more importantly they will demonstrate how close God is to His people when they call on Him.

Keep in mind that these same people were called into the desert out of Egypt where they had no food or water or a place to pitch their tents. They had to learn that when they called on God to save them, that God always came through and sustain them on their journey. Remember that they had to call out to God in their need.

In our second reading, James tells us Christians that we are given a new birth through the sacrifice of Jesus our Savior. This new birth is to spawn many new births when we become doers of the word and not just hearers. There are many ways to act on the word of God that is planted in you and James gave us two in our reading; care for orphans and widows.

I know of a family in our parish who acted on the Word planted in the hearts and adopted three sisters. They went to great expense and to adopt them into their family. More than that they adopted them into a dedicated Catholic family that observed the law in their hearts. Today I see this family not only worshipping together but actively helping in various ways with other young people of the parish in volunteering and doing their part of living out God's commands.

OK, I know that many of us aren't call to adopt, but we are called to maintain a Catholic home where God is adored and glorified. Where our children are taught to put their faith into action. Like belonging and supporting the Catholic Clubs that have been going on in the public high schools in Irvine. One of many ways to act on our faith.

Jesus tells His followers to give priority on the important they should do.

As Moses told the people not to add to the commands, the religious leaders started doing just that. In their scrupulousness they added to the different ways the people could disobey God's law. They enjoyed lording over the people and judged them on the manmade rules before God's rules.

When Jesus was asked to give the greatest commandment he had a very simple answer: LOVE GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND SOULS and LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.

So what is God calling you to do today to show your love for Him?