

DISCERNING THE WAY FORWARD THROUGH THE NARROW DOOR  
21<sup>st</sup> Sunday Ordinary Time Year C, 25<sup>th</sup> August 2019

THE NARROW DOOR

In today's Gospel passage from Luke, Jesus says,

***“Strive to enter through the narrow door;  
For many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able....”***

We might imagine ourselves  
trying to carry many possessions, a heavy load through a narrow space.  
We refuse to let go of them, and hence we get stuck at the narrow door.

We can ponder many aspects of our own lives  
that cause us to be – *stuck, trapped, isolated*.  
It might be an enormous *chip* on our shoulder.  
We might be trying to carry a big *grudge* through that narrow door.  
We might be trying to carry an -ISM, an *ideology* through the door.

God offers to carry us through that door.

WHAT COULD THAT MEAN?

[Pause to reflect on God's offer to carry us, to accompany us]

We can be so determined  
to do everything our own way that we *struggle needlessly*.

St John of the Cross in the [\*Prologue of the Ascent of Mount Carmel\*](#) said:

*“In resisting God who is conducting them, they make little progress...  
They resemble children who kick and cry and struggle to walk by themselves  
When their mothers want to carry them,  
in walking by themselves they make no headway,  
or if they do, it is at a child's pace.”*

[Pause to reflect on the comments of St John of the Cross]

Let us read the Gospel together.

GOSPEL

*‘Jesus went through one town and village after another,  
teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem.  
Someone asked him, ‘Lord, will only a few be saved?’*

*He said to them,*

***‘Strive to enter through the narrow door;  
for many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able.  
When once the owner of the house has got up and shut the door,  
and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door,  
saying, “Lord, open to us”, then in reply he will say to you,  
“I do not know where you come from.”***

*Then you will begin to say,  
“We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.”  
But he will say, “I do not know where you come from;  
go away from me, all you evildoers!”  
There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth  
when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob  
and all the prophets in the kingdom of God,  
and you yourselves thrown out.*

*Then people will come from east and west, from north and south,  
and will eat in the kingdom of God.  
Indeed, some are last who will be first,  
and some are first who will be last.’ ‘*

The Gospel passage gives us further insight:

*“Indeed, some are last who will be first,  
And some are first who will be last.”* (NRSV translation)

Or a more literal translation

*“And behold there are last ones who will be first  
and there are first ones who will be last”*

#### HUMBLE OPENNESS & COMMITMENT TO ACCOUNTABILITY

Humility is essential.

In the world of today’s work and responsibilities,  
we speak of – accountability, transparency, supervision, in-servicing,  
professional development, peer reflection.

Going through the narrow door

involves an *openness and commitment to accountability.*

Not trying to carry a *heavy load of cover-ups and corruption through the narrow door.*

#### DISCERNMENT PROCESS AS CHURCH

The Australian Catholic Church

is preparing for a Plenary Council in 2020 and 2021,  
the first Plenary Council in Australia since 1937.

We have participated in the consultation process of the Plenary Council  
and now we move to the second stage – of [discernment](#).

Over 220,000 replies have been collated in the consultation stage  
and placed under these [Six National Themes for Discernment](#).



## The 6 NATIONAL THEMES for DISCERNMENT



This weekend at each parish Mass, members from our Parish Pastoral Council will speak about our parish process possibilities to meet and discern on the theme *'Inclusive, participatory and synodal'*.

It is an opportunity to travel lightly through the narrow door together. Of being accountable to God and to each other.

Let us turn to God and pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance.

Fr. Gerry

[Readings: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/082519.cfm>]

