

'THE NARROW DOOR' - HOMILY 21 August 2016

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** through a narrow space.

We refuse to let go of them, and hence 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?

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."***

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"***

Humility is essential.

In the world of today's work and responsibilities,

We speak of –

Accountability, transparency, supervision, in-servicing, professional development, peer
reflection.

We have only to consider the public debate

Leading to a Royal Commission into a youth detention centre in the Northern Territory,

Or an Inquiry in Queensland into youth detention centres,

Or the many vital issues that the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child
Sexual Abuse is considering.

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.

In the lead-up to 2020 the Australian Catholic Church will prepare for a Plenary Council, The first Plenary Council in Australia since 1937.

Let us **ENABLE** the consultation process, and the Plenary Council, to become:

Transparent, visionary, repentant and inclusive.

An openness to listen and to act.

A time for healing.

An opportunity to travel lightly through the narrow door.

Being accountable to God and to each other.

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

[Fr. Gerry Hefferan – 'The Narrow Door' – 21 August 2016]

[Readings <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/082116.cfm>]