

So is everyone ready for a 10 minute homily on the 11th. Sunday in Ordinary Time.

Wait, why are all the Zoom boxes disappearing?

Happy Pride, everyone? (wait)

I love that Call and Response tradition that originated in the Sub-Saharan African cultures...Certainly something to be honored.

When Lourdes asked me if I would like to give the homily, the "share the word", or preach, I felt honored and immediately said "yes".

I must admit though...My thought was "why me" ... Why would I be the one doing the Pride Reflection...Someone who has had a lot of privilege in life...Someone who belongs to a lot of majority groups.

- White
- Male
- European heritage
- Middle Class
- And...someone who has a lot of privilege by being raised as an "only child".

I got to thinking about this a little bit more.

Given my identities, what is it that I could tap into that might help me talk to you about Pride.

I thought for a second and realized that, well, I have a lot of history...That's a nice way of saying I'm an older guy.

So let's take a look at some of that.

In my early 20s, back in the late 70s, when I first started going to the "gay clubs" in Boston. There was a lot of talk in the clubs around Pride.

- Should we go?
- Will we end up on television?
- Could I lose my job if spotted here?
- Could I lose my family if they see me on the TV news?
- Will there be people there on the sidelines yelling the 3 letter F word or the 4 letter D word at us?
- Will the police be kind to us?

So many things to think about.

Back then, it was, in reality, a gay and lesbian march. Okay.... Maybe bisexual too and a few trans people....But the inclusivity really wasn't there yet.

As time went on, more and more people started to go to Pride, even though there was a little bit of a pull back when the AIDS crisis hit.

By the late 1980s, we started to see some straight allies cheering us on.

We added the T to LGB and trans people were now noticeably a very important part of pride, not that they weren't always an important part.

By the turn of the century, the march in Boston became huge...Allies were everywhere...We added more identities to our name

- Queer
- Questioning
- Intersex
- Ally
- Asexual

During this past decade, we've had up to 100,000 people at Boston Pride....Pretty amazing!

Our identities as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual people became more solidified.

Our straight allies began recognizing who we are.

And within our sexual orientation, gender expression, and gender identities there is even more of a richness... A richness that sometimes does not get explored... And that is the richness of other kinds of diversity.

Racial identities

- Black African/African American
- Latino/Latina/Latinex
- Asian and Asian Americans
- Native Americans
- European Americans
- White
- And many more

In an ideal world, we would want to be proud of all of these racial identities but because of the oppression that

some of these racial identities have put on others, it can be difficult to show full pride.

Then we have Religious and Spiritual Identities

- Jewish
- Muslim
- Hindu
- Buddhist
- Christian
- Spiritual
- And non-religious identities such as agnostic, atheist
- And, again, many more

We have class identities within our LGBTQIA community.

- The rich
- Middle class
- Working class
- Poor
- And those that bounce between these

And, of course, age identities

- Older
- Middle age

- Young adult
- Teenager
- And even younger

I apologize in advance if I left an identity that is near and dear to you out.

But I invite you to think about all of your identities when claiming "Pride"....And, perhaps, the right word, in some cases, might not always be "pride".....It might be "proud to be a survivor" "proud to be resilient" as we think about these identities:

- Adult Child of an Alcoholic
- Survivor of Physical Abuse
- Survivor of Sexual Abuse
- Survivor of Alcohol Abuse or Substance Abuse
- Child of Divorced Parents
- Being Divorced
- Single Parent
- Growing Up Parentless
- To name a few

How do we claim our pride in growing up strong and, perhaps, even stronger because of our ability to deal with these identities?

Today, I invite you to think about all of the identity groups that you belong to.

The ones that are easy to show pride in.

The ones that might be difficult to show pride in.

So let's bring this back and try to look at this in terms tonight's readings....In the First Reading from Ezekiel, if we think of ourselves as that Cedar tree on the top of the mountain, what shoots are we letting sprout and what shoots are dying off?....

In tonight's Gospel from Mark, what are the mustard seeds that we have been neglecting that we need to spring up to become the largest of the shrubs, with branches big enough for the birds of the sky to nest in.

The question that I would like to leave you with to think about is

"Which identity or identities do you have where you are still feel less than fully proud"

"Where is it, within that identity or those identities, that you can claim pride"

Your homework during this Pride month. Happy Pride!