

## The Cost of a Relationship

### Homily for August 17, 2025

We all need to love and be loved, but there is a cost to love. It's not something that happens overnight; we have to work at it. When I prepare couples for their weddings, I encourage them to keep dating each other after their marriage so they will continue to get to know one another. Human beings are so complex, and because of that, we can't claim to truly know each other after just a few months or even years. As you get to know each other better and grow closer, you discover things you didn't know. In the process, you may get hurt. The more it hurts, the more it shows how deep your love is for the other person. In every genuine relationship, there is joy and tears, and above all, sacrifice.

In the Scripture, we hear about the friendship of Jonathan and David — one of the most remarkable friendships ever recorded. Without knowing what the future holds, Jonathan willingly gives up his right to the throne for his friend. What a remarkable, self-sacrificing love! Jonathan defended David when his father Saul wanted to kill him. In today's first reading, Jeremiah is accused of being unpatriotic when he asks the Jews to surrender Jerusalem to the Babylonians to save it from destruction. The Jewish people declared his words treasonous, and they told the king, "Jeremiah ought to be put to death; he is demoralizing the soldiers who are left in this city, and all the people, by speaking such things to them; he is not interested in the welfare of our people, but in their ruin."

When Jeremiah was thrown into a cistern, his friend Ebed-Melech bravely confronted the king and told him that Jeremiah was wrongly accused. He didn't care if he risked losing his position in the palace court. He stood up for what was right and was willing to sacrifice for his friend, no matter what the circumstances.

The words of Jesus in today's Gospel might seem to contradict His purpose for coming because He is known as the "Prince of Peace," the teacher who said, "Blessed are peacemakers," the gentle and kind Jesus who healed the sick and gathered the little children to Him. Yet He asks, "Do you think that I have come to establish peace on the earth?"

A true relationship with Jesus will sometimes cause division between us and our loved ones. There are moments when our faith will be tested. Our Catholic Church is quite divided over our Catholic Social Teachings. Instead of concentrating on our differences, we should focus on what unites us: our relationship with Jesus. Remember that following Jesus comes with a cost, and we should never shy away from sacrifices. "Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?'" Mt.16:24-