

Homily On Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time
(Year A)
October 11, 2020
In Oyama Parish

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Dear Brothers and Sisters

Today is the second time for me to celebrate Sunday as Bishop of Saitama at this church. The first time was when I had officiated Saturday Mass in Spanish, together with Reverend Fr. Gianluca. Now the pastor of this church is Reverend Fr. Johnson de Souza. To begin with mass, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for his invitation today.

You may probably know that on the last Saturday, October 3rd, Pope Francis had made his fourth visit to the city of Assisi, to sign on his third Encyclical, entitled FRATELLI TUTTI, just beside the tomb of San Francisco. This new encyclical is just the continuation of his previous one "LAUDATO SI, which was published 5 years ago, on May 24, 2015. The meaning of the title of this new encyclical in English is very simple and clear, that is, we are all brothers. Pope Francis, as the spiritual leader of humanity, has called upon all religious and political leaders, and all men and women of the world, not only Catholics but also non-Catholics, has called to take care of our land or planet as our common home. We may even say that the Earth is a living organism, and now no longer appears to endure the severe treatment by its inhabitants, namely the human being. For example, we keep producing a lot of toxic garbage every day, and consequently the oceans and mountains are getting saturated with garbage (of gomi), and the whole nature might be said severely polluted already.

Under this situation, Pope Francis tells us that if we want to save human being from such an environmental crisis, we must listen more to Jesus and live our life following his gospel, just as San Francisco de Assisi did about 800 years ago. San Francis died in 1230. Pope Francis, as spiritual leader and pastor of today's world, might have felt urged by the Holy Spirit to make a strong call to fraternity and friendship among the inhabitants of this earth, planet.

For this reason, the message contained in today's Gospel, as well as in the first reading and especially in the responsorial psalm of the Good Shepherd, is just the same as the request of Pope Francis which is strongly shown in his new encyclical FRATELLI TUTTI. Accordingly, we can headline today's homily as : Jesus and Pope Francis invite us to be Brothers of all.

Pope Francis may probably know that there might be many people in the world who will not accept his invitation, including especially many political leaders, even perhaps religious leaders, But I also know that there might be more number of people who might be more in tune and solidarity with Pope Francis. Let us listen more to Pope Francis and collaborate more to make our world more fraternal and supportive one.