

St. Paul's Pastoral Letters

July 14, 2014

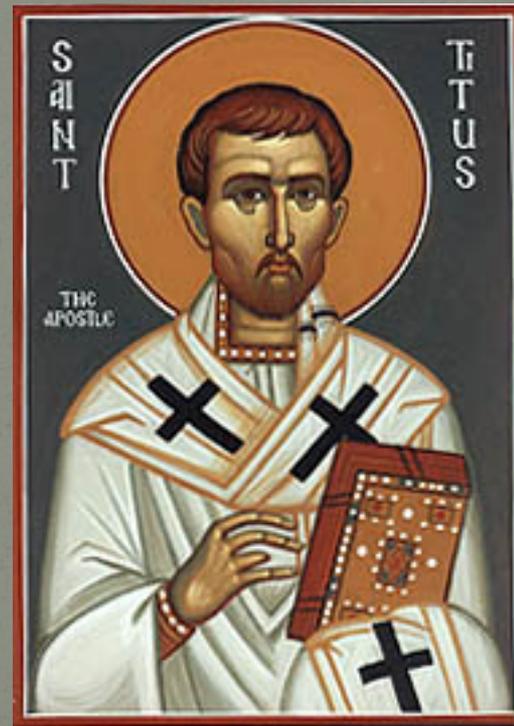
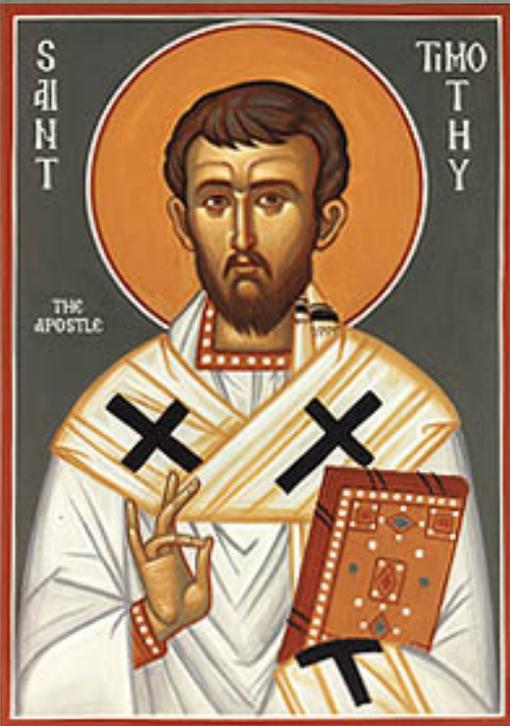
By: Sr Clara Maria Malay, SCTJM



A Witness to Authentic Love and Genuine Friendship in the Pastoral Letters of Timothy and Titus

A Bible Study for University Students
Considering the Pastoral teachings of authentic love
and friendship in the Letters to St. Timothy and St. Titus

ST. TIMOTHY AND ST. TITUS
GIVE WITNESS TO AUTHENTIC LOVE
AND GENUINE FRIENDSHIP



INTRODUCTION TO PASTORAL LETTERS

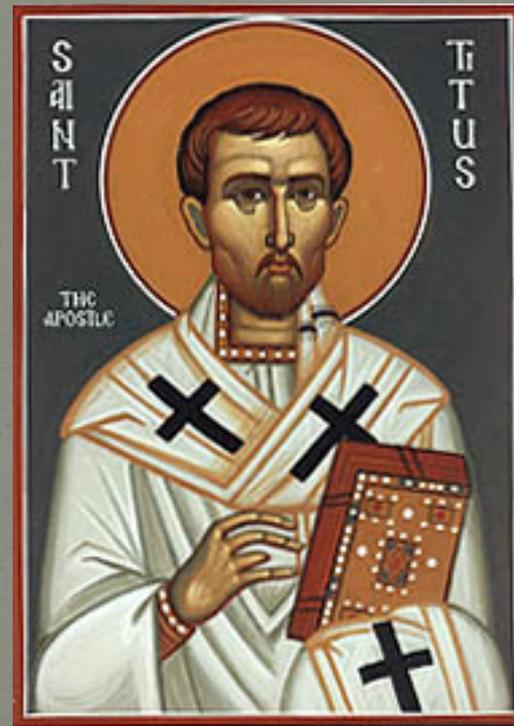
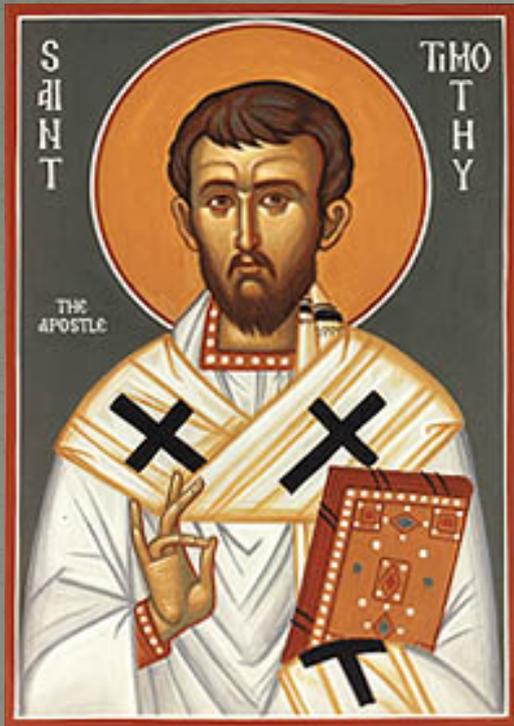
INTRODUCTION TO PASTORAL LETTERS

- This Bible Study will explore the richness of genuine friendship through the witness of St. Paul's life and writings shared with Sts. Timothy and Titus.
 - In today's culture technology has had a great influence and impact on the way we relate and communicate with each other. This naturally affects the art of friendship and so we will go back to the beginning of what St. Paul practiced and taught to his disciples after the model of Christ and the 12 Apostles.
 - Establishing this model of friendship will lead to the practical application in ones life and sharing the Gospel.

INTRODUCTION TO PASTORAL LETTERS

- To prepare for this Bible study please read these 3 letters each week (maybe even 2 chapters a day)
- Be familiar with the context of these letters, although we will only focus on specific aspects of each in this study overall it will help your understanding.
- St. Paul is writing to his partners in mission while they have been entrusted with the care of specific Church Communities.

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WEEK ONE: AUTHENTIC LOVE LEADS
TO GENUINE FRIENDSHIP

AUTHENTIC LOVE LEADS TO GENUINE FRIENDSHIP

- All friendship has its origins in love.
 - St. Paul's relation with Timothy and Titus is clearly deeper than a surface friendship. His relationships and love for others encourage a relationship with God.
- The Greek tradition contains four distinguishing words for love :
 - Storge- affection
 - Philia- friendship
 - Eros- romantic
 - Agape- unconditional or divine love
(Summary taken from C.S. Lewis "Four Loves", 1960)



AUTHENTIC LOVE LEADS TO GENUINE FRIENDSHIP

- “Agape (love, charity) appears 10 times in the Pastoral letters, an indication of how central it is in the administration of the Church.” (Neyrey)
 - *“The aim of this instruction is love from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith” 1 Tim 1:5*
- “In the New Testament Agape is reserved for the highest form of love—divine love—in which by grace human beings can participate.” (Montague, p. 37)
 - “Agape, Christian love is based on service and sacrifice... We are called to live by the force and by the conviction that we have been called to agape love. Love that is described by St. Paul as the superior path of perfection in 1 Cor. 13.” (Mother Adela Galindo, Foundress SCTJM)

AUTHENTIC LOVE LEADS TO GENUINE FRIENDSHIP

- Receiving this grace of unconditional love from God encourages us to love others in a like manner through the gift of Friendship.
- To Love another is to will the good of the other. All friendship calls for this unselfish love.
- Genuine friendship requires love if it is to endure the hardships and trials of life.
- St. Paul speaks to both Timothy and Titus as true friends and brothers in the faith, unselfishly willing their good and the good of the Church.



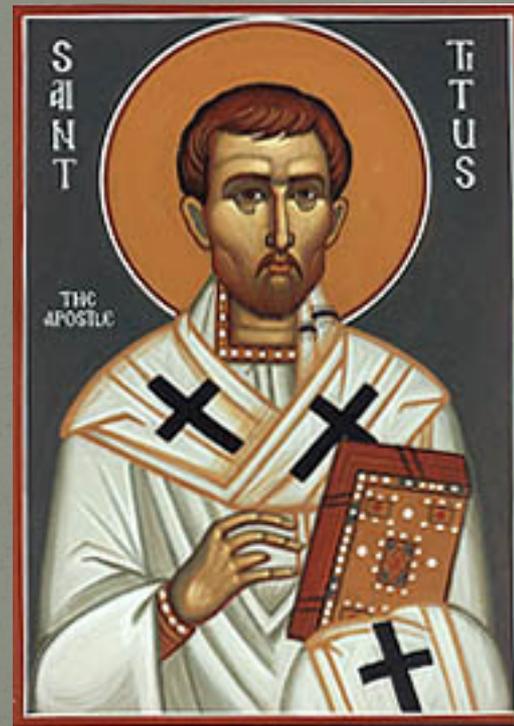
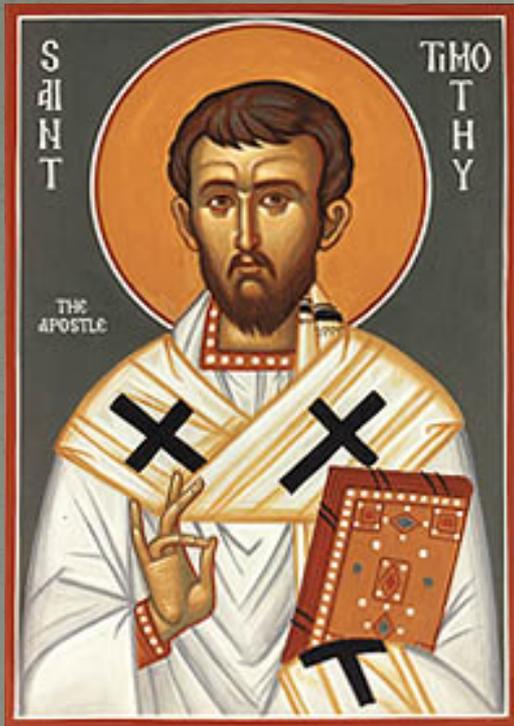
AUTHENTIC LOVE LEADS TO GENUINE FRIENDSHIP

- Reflection questions...

Next week we will explore St. Paul's advice for friendship, in the mean time let us consider our personal experience of friendship...

- How have I loved those friends that the Lord has placed in my life?
- How can I choose the good of my friends over my selfishness, and love them more genuinely?
- Reflect on some of the many ways the Lord has poured out his unconditional agape love to me personally.
- How can I share His great love with others?

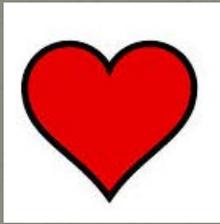
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WEEK TWO: ASPECTS OF GENUINE FRIENDSHIP

ASPECTS OF GENUINE FRIENDSHIP

- There are many aspects to genuine friendship; as we discussed last week, love is foundational in friendship
- St. Paul encourages many of these aspects especially; **fidelity, charity and prayer.**



- Fidelity to God, for even when we are not faithful He is.
 - *“If we have died with him we shall also live with him; if we persevere we shall also reign with him. But if we deny him he will deny us. If we are unfaithful he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself.” 2 Tim 2:11-14*

ASPECTS OF GENUINE FRIENDSHIP

- Fidelity to what has been taught and to whom God has sent to teach His word:
 - *“But you, remain faithful to what you have learned and believed, because you know from whom you learned it, and that from infancy you have known [the] sacred scriptures, which are capable of giving you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.” 2 Tim 3: 14-15*
- This fidelity is to protect the gift of our salvation so at the end of our lives we can proclaim with St. Paul:
 - *“I have competed well; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. From now on the crown of righteousness awaits me, which the Lord, the just judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but to all who have longed for his appearance.” 2 Tim 4:6*

ASPECTS OF GENUINE FRIENDSHIP



- Charity; St. Paul's greatest act of charity is to help others obtain salvation. This is accomplished through charitable instruction, formation, and challenges.
 - *“Do not rebuke an older man but exhort him as you would a father; treat younger men as brothers, older women like mothers, and younger women as sisters all in purity.”*
1 Tim. 5: 1-2

ASPECTS OF GENUINE FRIENDSHIP

- Prayer to God accompanies genuine friendship:
 - *“I am grateful to God,...as I remember you constantly in my **prayers**, night and day” 2 Tim 1:3*
 - *“For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected when received with thanksgiving, for it is made holy by the invocation of God in **prayer**” 1 Tim 4:4*
 - *“It is my wish, then, that in every place the men should **pray**, lifting up holy hands, without anger or argument” 1 Tim 2:8*
 - *“The prayer of the community should be unmarred by internal dissension” (USCCB Commentary)*

ASPECTS OF GENUINE FRIENDSHIP

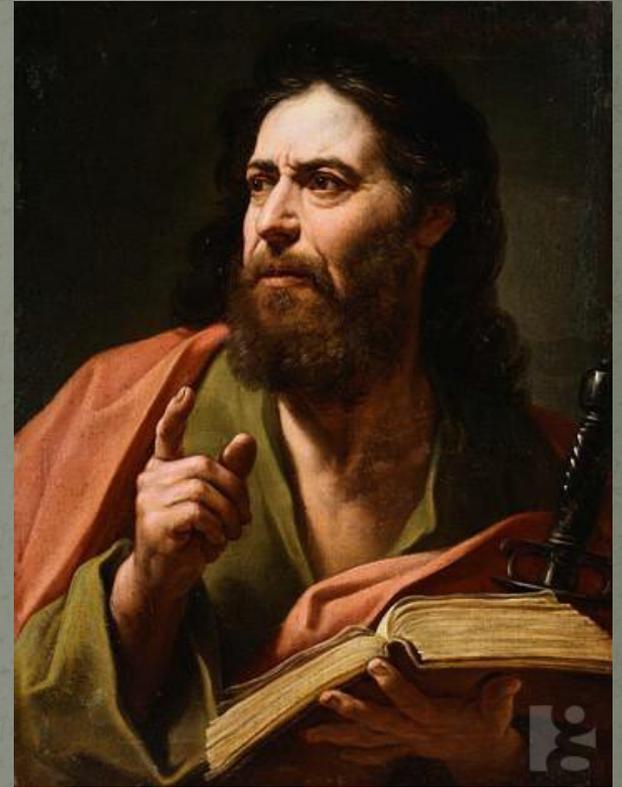
- Community prayer encouraged love for others...
 - *“I ask that supplications, **prayers**, petitions, and thanksgivings be offered for everyone, for kings and for all in authority that we may lead a quiet and tranquil life in all devotion and dignity.”*
1 Tim 2: 1
- “Liturgical prayer of the community concern itself with the needs of all, whether Christian or not, and especially of those in authority, may imply that a disposition existed at Ephesus to refuse prayer for pagans. In actuality, such prayer aids the community to achieve peaceful relationships with non-Christians and contributes to salvation, since it derives its value from the presence within the community of Christ, who is the one and only savior of all” (USCCB commentary)

ASPECTS OF GENUINE FRIENDSHIP

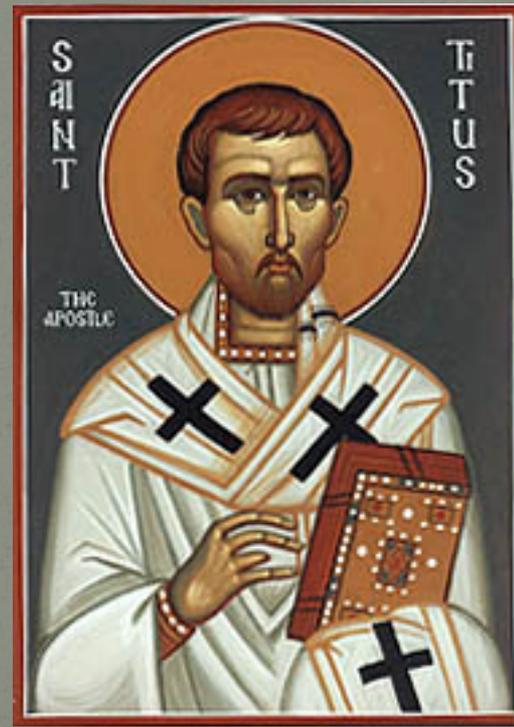
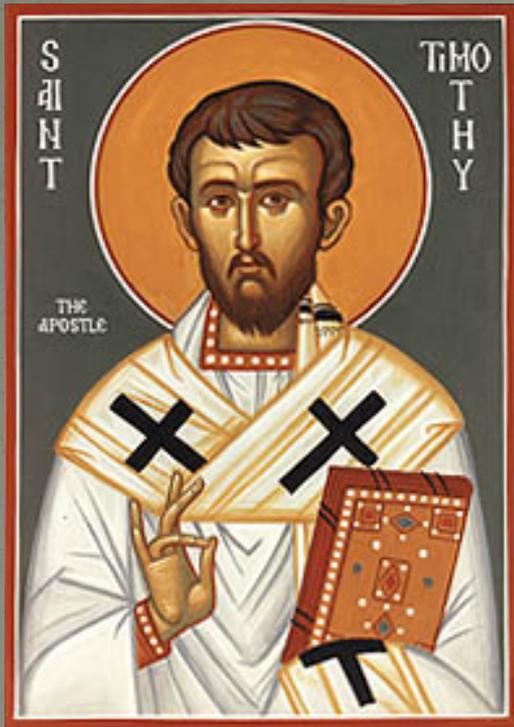
- Reflection

Questions...encouraging and protecting genuine friendship.

- How have I experienced and practiced fidelity, charity, and prayer in my friendships?
- How can I grow in my friendship with the Lord?
- How can I bring Christ into the friendships I have developed?
- What harms the genuineness of friendship that I need to guard against?



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WEEK THREE: WHO ARE YOU LISTENING TO?

WHO ARE YOU LISTENING TO?

- The strong sense of fidelity that St. Paul suggests in genuine friendship is encouraged to combat the many voices and temptations against the Lord that will come.
- St. Paul is teaching the disciples to attune their ear to the voice of the Good Shepherd and Him alone.
 - Timothy is warned that, in later times some will depart from the faith by giving heed to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons. 1 Tim 4:1
- “Hence Paul predicts heretics attacking the Church like wolves (Acts 20:29), just as Peter did (2 Pt 3:3)....So heresy is not a late event in the history of the Church; it might be said that doctrinal pluralism has been with us since the beginning.” (Neyrey, p. 19)

WHO ARE YOU LISTENING TO?

- Guard your faith with an attentive ear...
 - *“Some people have deviated from these and turned to meaningless talk, wanting to be teachers of the law, but without understanding either what they are saying or what they assert with such assurance.” 1 Tim 1:6-7*
 - *“Some, by rejecting conscience, have made a shipwreck of their faith” 1 Tim. 1: 19*
 - *“Whoever teaches something different and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the religious teaching is conceited, understanding nothing, and has a morbid disposition for arguments and verbal disputes. From these come envy, rivalry, insults, evil suspicions, and mutual friction among people with corrupted minds, who are deprived of the truth, supposing religion to be a means of gain.” 1 Tim 6:2-6*

WHO ARE YOU LISTENING TO?

- St. Paul contrast two types of teachers: false and good. First he speaks of the root causes and then the final results of evil teachers are exposed.
- “By definition a false teacher is one who does not adhere to the sound teaching proper to religion; he is rather inclined to speculation, polemics, and controversy...
- And since by the fruits you shall know them, they are shown to be false from the list of vices to which false teaching traditionally leads. The vices are those which fracture a community...
- True teaching does not fracture communities and lead to arrogance. Timothy’s task is faithful witness to Christ and the gospel.” (Neyrey, 25-26)

WHO ARE YOU LISTENING TO?

- But you be self-possessed...a genuine friend helps keep the other on the straight and narrow path
 - *“For the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine but, following their own desires and insatiable curiosity, will accumulate teachers and will stop listening to the truth and will be diverted to myths. But you, be self-possessed in all circumstances; put up with hardship; perform the work of an evangelist; fulfill your ministry.” 2 Tim 4:3*
 - *“Avoid foolish and ignorant debates, for you know that they breed quarrels.” 2 Tim 2:23*



WHO ARE YOU LISTENING TO?

- The warnings of St. Paul continue through all three letters proving the importance of guarding our ears
 - *“Avoid profane, idle talk, for such people will become more and more godless, and their teaching will spread like gangrene.” 2 Tim 2:16*
- A commentary combines these warnings with others; “The final times will be marked by false teachings that could lead astray, even the elect. Such lies and temptations to infidelity can come only from Satan (2 Cor 4:4; James 3:15), who in the guise of false teachers can sometimes masquerade as an angel of light (2 Cor 11:13-14).” (Montegue, p. 93)

WHO ARE YOU LISTENING TO?

- St. Paul to Titus:
 - *“Therefore, admonish them sharply, so that they may be sound in the faith, instead of paying attention to Jewish myths and regulations of people who have repudiated the truth. To the clean all things are clean, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is clean; in fact, both their minds and their consciences are tainted” Titus 1:13*
- “Good Theology leads to good morality. Hence good citizenship is not only compatible with Christianity but enhanced by it.” (Neyrey, 47)
 - *“I want you to insist on these points, that those who have believed in God be careful to devote themselves to good works; these are excellent and beneficial to others. Avoid foolish arguments, genealogies, rivalries, and quarrels about the law, for they are useless and futile. After a first and second warning, break off contact with a heretic, realizing that such a person is perverted and sinful and stands self-condemned.” Titus 3: 8*

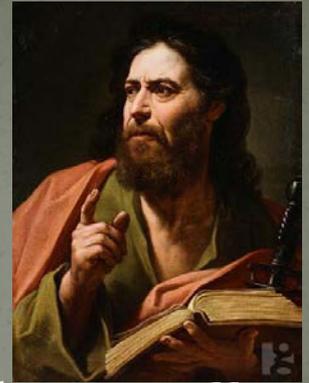
WHO ARE YOU LISTENING TO?

- St. Paul encourages as well as warns Christ followers...
 - *“But you, man of God, avoid all this. Instead, pursue righteousness, devotion, faith, love, patience, and gentleness. Compete well for the faith. Lay hold of eternal life, to which you were called when you made the noble confession in the presence of many witnesses. I charge [you] before God ... to keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ...To him be honor and eternal power. Amen.”*
1 Tim 6:11-16
- “In contrast to the false teachers is Timothy, a man of God. He is seeking after virtues that build up the church, such as piety, faith, loving service, perseverance, and gentleness.”
(Neyrey, 26)
 - *“So turn from youthful desires and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord with purity of heart.” 2 Tim 2:22*

WHO ARE YOU LISTENING TO?

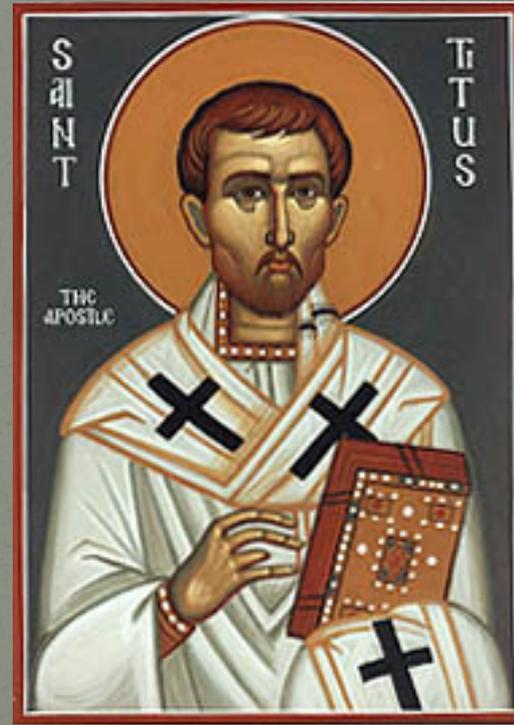
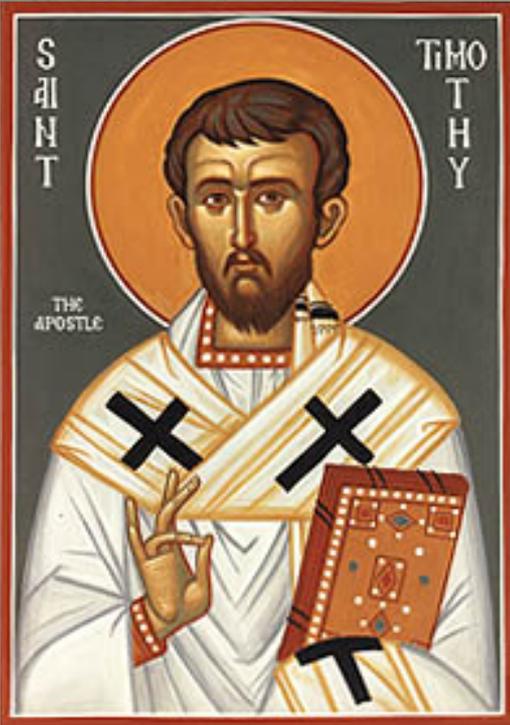
- St. Paul is warning us to avoid the temptations that he knows will come, cautioning them to detect the temptations before they fall.
 - *“People will be self-centered and lovers of money, proud, haughty, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, irreligious, callous, implacable, slanderous, licentious, brutal, hating what is good, traitors, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, they make a pretense of religion but deny its power. Reject them.” 2 Tim 3:2*
- “Obviously Timothy’s greatest trial is dealing with the opponents...they will not tolerate “sound doctrine,” which is a favorite phrase in these letters, “soundness” being a quality of teaching, words, preaching, and faith.” (Neyrey, 39)

WHO ARE YOU LISTENING TO?



- Reflection Questions:
- If we do not allow God to fill our desires we will naturally seek others to fill our voids. Only Jesus came to give us abundant life anything else will leave us empty. We must seek Him with all our heart, mind and strength, and lead others to do the same.
 - Am I guarding my ears? Which voices am I allowing to influence my thoughts and actions?
 - Do I cultivate friendships that are leading me to God?
 - Am I leading my friends to the Lord? Warning them against even popular ideas that may harm their soul or eternity?

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WEEK FOUR: RELATIONAL CATECHESIS

RELATIONAL CATECHESIS

- Christ's incarnation serves as a model of catechesis for us. He comes to us and communes with us and thus we are to bring others to Him through our communion with them.
- Christ comes uniquely to each one of us, as he did to Paul:
 - *“I am grateful to him who has strengthened me, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he considered me trustworthy in appointing me to the ministry. I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and an arrogant man, but I have been mercifully treated because I acted out of ignorance in my unbelief. Indeed, the grace of our Lord has been abundant, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. This saying is trustworthy and deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Of these I am the foremost. But for that reason I was mercifully treated, so that in me, as the foremost, Christ Jesus might display all his patience as an example for those who would come to believe in him for everlasting life. To the king of ages, incorruptible, invisible, the only God, honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.” 1 Timothy 1:12-17*

RELATIONAL CATECHESIS

- “St. Paul calls Timothy his “true child in faith,” just as he spoke of himself to Christians as their “father.” This way of speaking illustrates the church’s understanding of itself as a genuinely new family, especially showing warmth to those who may have sacrificed natural family ties for Christ.”
(Neyrey, 11)
 - *“To Titus, my true child in our common faith: grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our savior” Titus 1:4*
 - *“I entrust this charge to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophetic words once spoken about you. Through them may you fight a good fight by having faith and a good conscience.” 1 Tim 1:18-19*
 - *“To Timothy, my dear child: grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.”
2 Tim 1:2*

RELATIONAL CATECHESIS

- St. Paul desires to be with the Early Church as Christ came to dwell with us. He is following the model that Christ gave to build up the Church and share the Gospel.
- “Paul’s total conversion from sin to ministry becomes the moral example for Timothy and for all of us.” (Neyrey, p.13)
 - *“I am writing you about these matters, although I hope to visit you soon.” 1 Tim 3:14*
- We are also called to bring those we are in relationship to God and to share with them the Good News
 - *“Remind people of these things and charge them before God to stop disputing about words. This serves no useful purpose since it harms those who listen. Be eager to present yourself as acceptable to God, a workman who causes no disgrace, imparting the word of truth without deviation.” 2 Tim 2 :14*

RELATIONAL CATECHESIS

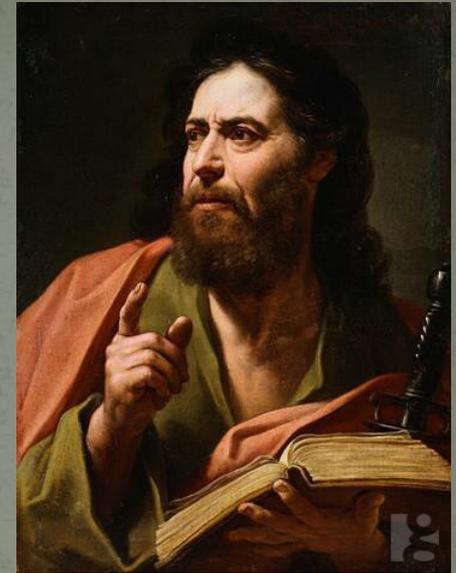
- St. Paul's practical application to St. Timothy and to us in our lives and relationships: sharing the faith in love
 - *“So you, my child, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And what you heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will have the ability to teach others as well.” 2 Tim 2:1-2*
 - *“Those whose masters are believers must not take advantage of them because they are brothers but must give better service because those who will profit from their work are believers and are beloved.” 1 Tim 6:2*
 - *“A slave of the Lord should not quarrel, but should be gentle with everyone, able to teach, tolerant, correcting opponents with kindness. 2 Tim 2:24-26*

RELATIONAL CATECHESIS

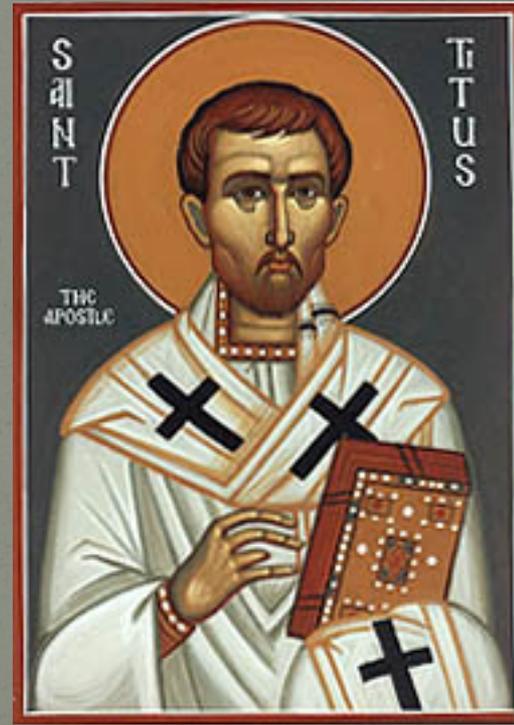
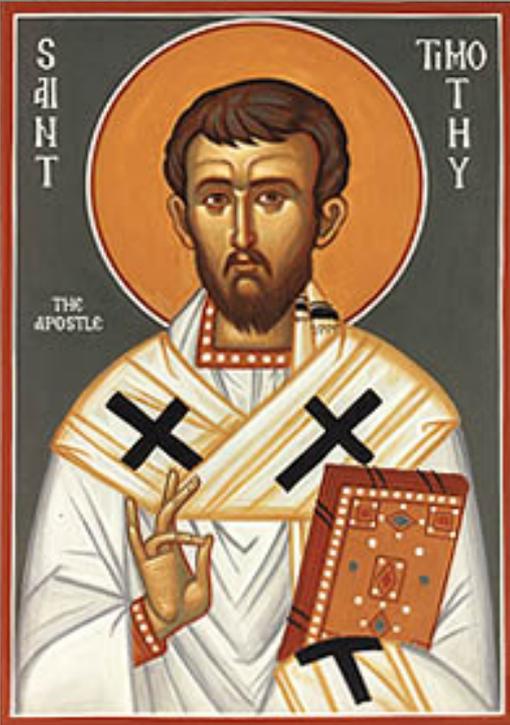
- St. Timothy is to guard the deposit of faith, although he is not simply transmitting facts but sharing a deep part of who himself. He cares deeply for those who have been entrusted to him.
- “Here we touch the heart of the author’s concern for these churches, that their lives be worthy of their calling. He sees that true doctrine leads to good morals and to a religiously integrated life.”
- “Timothy’s task is an active one—practical love which comes only from what is pure good and sincere.”
- “The inner person, totally caught up in the gospel, will express itself richly in a morally upright life, but the inner self must be formed in truth.” (Neyrey, p. 12)

RELATIONAL CATECHESIS

- Reflection Questions:
 - Am I living a moral life, in the fullness that Christ came to give me?
 - Do I follow the pattern that Christ modeled by going to serve those in need?
 - How can I inspire those I am in relationships with to come to know Christ more deeply?
 - Have I asked God if who he wants me to befriend and share God's love with, seeking those who need Him?



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WEEK FIVE: AUTHENTIC LOVE AND GENUINE FRIENDSHIP
ARE THE FOUNDATIONS FOR THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

AUTHENTIC LOVE IS THE FOUNDATION FOR THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

- Sharing the Gospel needs to be done in love and genuine friendship, therefore Paul's Pastoral Letters are a guide for us to participate more fully in the New Evangelization.
- To Guard what we have received in faith, recognize the gift and share it with those entrusted to us by God.
- Guard the gift of the deposit of faith, in its fullness
 - *“O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you.”
1 Tim 6:20*
 - *“Take as your norm the sound words that you heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Guard this rich trust with the help of the holy Spirit that dwells within us.” Tim 1: 13*

AUTHENTIC LOVE IS THE FOUNDATION FOR THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

- Share this Good News... “The prime task of St. Timothy’s ministry is to “hand on” what he received” (Neyrey, p. 33)
 - *“I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingly power: proclaim the word; be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient; convince, reprimand, encourage through all patience and teaching.” 2 Tim 4:1*
 - *“Tell them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous, ready to share, thus accumulating as treasure a good foundation for the future, so as to win the life that is true life.” 1 Tim 6:8*

AUTHENTIC LOVE IS THE FOUNDATION FOR THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

- Exhort your brothers and sisters in charity...
 - *“Say these things. Exhort and correct with all authority. Let no one look down on you.” Titus 2: 15*
 - *“If you will give these instructions to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound teaching you have followed...This saying is trustworthy and deserves full acceptance. For this we toil and struggle, because we have set our hope on the living God, who is the savior of all, especially of those who believe.” 1 Tim 4:6*

AUTHENTIC LOVE IS THE FOUNDATION FOR THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

- St. Paul gains his strength from the grace of God
 - *“He saved us and called us to a holy life, not according to our works but according to his own design and the grace bestowed on us in Christ Jesus before time began, but now made manifest through the appearance of our savior Christ Jesus, who destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” 2 Tim 1:9*
 - *“Be strong in grace” 2 Tim 2:1*



AUTHENTIC LOVE IS THE FOUNDATION FOR THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

- St. Paul's guides, how one can practically respond to this call of God...only by God's grace.
 - *“For this reason, I remind you to stir into flame the gift of God that you have through the imposition of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather of power and love and self-control. So do not be ashamed of your testimony to our Lord, nor of me, a prisoner for his sake; but bear your share of hardship for the gospel with the strength that comes from God.” 2 Tim 1: 6-8*
- “The contrast between former pagan lives of vice and present Christian lives of virtue rests not on a strenuous moral effort on the part of Christians but on God's action of grace” (Neyrey, 47)

AUTHENTIC LOVE IS THE FOUNDATION FOR THE NEW EVANGELIZATION



- Reflection Questions:
 - Do I realize my Christian duty to share the faith? How?
 - What can I do to encourage those who don't know God's love and mercy?
 - Have I experienced God's love and mercy in my heart? Really truly? Than why would I hesitate to share it with those I love?

CONCLUSION

- In all the practical advice that the Pastoral letters offer St. Paul gives hope to his brothers and sisters by reminding them of his journey of faith. Even if one is not perfect the Lord is merciful and desires to transform each person through the power of his grace. Therefore let us trust in God's mercy, work together to avoid false doctrines, and encourage our brothers and sisters in the faith.

CONCLUSION

- St. Paul concludes the Pastoral Letters with these hopeful words to St. Titus 3:3
 - *“For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, deluded, slaves to various desires and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful ourselves and hating one another. But when the kindness and generous love of God our savior appeared, not because of any righteous deeds we had done but because of his mercy, he saved us through the bath of rebirth and renewal by the holy Spirit, whom he richly poured out on us through Jesus Christ our savior, so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life. This saying is trustworthy.”*

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