

## **MAY 15, 2025 – HOMILY BY FR. HENK VAN MEIJEL**

The Gospel—I always like the Gospel of John. But usually, I have to read it a few times because it can be very complicated how it goes from one idea to the other.

But Jesus, of course—he's the master. And he's talking to his disciples as servants. Masters start off as servants.

So Jesus—we could look at Jesus' life. Of course, he was a very fast learner. But as a child, he would have, from a human perspective, been a servant: helping Mommy, helping Daddy—St. Joseph and Mary, of course. Helping them, helping around the house, and so on. But of course, he was a fast learner, and he, shall we say, graduated very fast.

And of course, he was in touch with who he was. He knew he was the Son of God at the Last Supper. He knew that he had to suffer. And he also knew, of course, as we read in Scripture, that the one who was going to betray him—of course, Judas Iscariot.

He was totally in touch with himself. And this is, of course, our journey too: to figure out how we fit in salvation history, how we fit into the big picture.

Often it's only when we're past something that we can look back in history and see how it all fits together.

In the first reading, of course, we have St. Paul speaking to the people of Antioch in Pisidia, which is actually in western Türkiye. It was a strategic location, and so it was a very important place where he explains in the synagogue exactly who Jesus is, by starting with salvation history—how God brought the people out of Egypt and into the

Promised Land, and how John the Baptist was announcing the coming of Jesus.

So when we can look back in history, then we know how to go forward. And this is so important in our lives, especially when we're discerning major decisions.

It's always about going back—how do I fit into salvation history? Where is God calling me?

That can be a bit of a job: to really look at our lives and come in touch with our family history and our family's suffering journey, and so on. Because every family has a suffering journey. Every family has blessings. But when we come in touch with it, when we can learn from it, then we also know more and more who we are in God, and what our calling is here on earth.

So servants can become masters. And it goes on from generation to generation.

A few weeks ago, before Easter, I had the privilege of taking confessions at the high school. I would say to these fifteen-year-olds, "What are your plans for the future? What are your plans for the future beyond high school?"

I always get a kick out of it when they say, "Oh, I want to be a movie star," or, "I want to be a professional hockey player," and so on. It's beautiful to dream like that.

But I usually say, "Do you also think of a Plan B maybe? Because the chance that you will be famous is very minimal." Of course, they are at the beginning of their life and they're trying to figure it out for themselves.

But it is a journey we all have to go through—trying to figure it out as we move forward.

In Acts, by going through salvation history, Paul can explain who Jesus is and why Jesus is called. This is good material for us to pray with as we go along in our own lives, especially as we get older, to look back over our lives and see our blessed history—how God was with us through different events, and to know our place in that history.

It doesn't mean we have to be famous. It's just about knowing our spot.

Actually, today on the Universal Calendar, we celebrate Isidore the Farmer—or Isidore the Labourer. He lived from 1070 to 1130 and became about 60 years old.

He knew he was a labourer. He knew that he would never rise in the ranks. And of course, this is one of the problems in today's society—we think we can be everything, that we can be the CEO of some corporation. But that may not be where we belong.

He knew where he belonged. He was a labourer. He gave his life to God and to his master. When he was reprimanded for going to morning Mass by his earthly master, he said that he had no choice but to listen to the higher Master.

That Master, of course, is God. His Master was God, and he knew he was a servant. He did not have to be ashamed of it.

He was a labourer and made an honest living.

Amen.