

JANUARY 27, 2026 BISHOP ROBERT KASUN

For some hearers of today's Gospel, the passage might be just a little bit disconcerting. And that is because it may appear, at first glance, that Jesus is pushing aside his mother and his brothers and sisters.

Probably those relatives, or townspeople from his hometown, have come to Jesus to see him. This passage occurs shortly after the beginning of Jesus' public ministry, and he has already become a very popular preacher.

There are apparently a large number of people who are gathered around him. And so when Mary and the brothers and sisters approach, they stay outside—either outside the building, or outside the circle of those who are listening to Jesus speak.

But when they arrive, the word gets to the front, to the centre, where Jesus is. “Your mother, your brothers, and your sisters are here, and they are asking for you.”

Then the surprise comment from Jesus is, “Who are my mother, and my brothers and sisters?” Then, answering his own question, he points to the crowd and says, “Here are my mother, and my brothers, and my sisters.”

Those who hear the word of God, and live according to the will of God, they are the family members of Jesus.

This is not to be seen as a dismissal, or even a slight negligence of Mary and other family members, or relatives, or friends, because it would not fit with the composite whole of the teaching of Jesus. Jesus urges love for one another.

And certainly, as Mary was standing at the cross, after the moment of Jesus' death, he entrusted her and her care to John, the beloved disciple. So it is not in any way a put-down of the family members.

Instead, we may take the words of Jesus as a compliment to us, who are the hearers. In other words, Jesus is saying to us that he wishes us to be the members of his family.

Certainly, we may say the same thing. We wish to be members of his family. And we know we are. That is accomplished in the sacrament of baptism.

But when Jesus tells us that he wishes to enter into a deeper union of love with us, to be considered as family members, we are deeply honoured and complimented.

Of course, it may even instil within us an enthusiasm for discipleship, or a zeal for it, because we know that Jesus wants us in his mission.

So today, may we rejoice in the invitation of Jesus to live as members of his close, intimate family.

And may our response today be something akin to King David in today's first reading, who, in the presence of the Ark of the Covenant—which meant the presence of God—danced and rejoiced, and celebrated God's presence.

It was an occasion of deepening of his trust in God, amidst all the loud singing and dancing, and the sounds of tambourines, and lutes, and harps, and the general rejoicing.

May that too be our experience, as we become ever more deeply aware of our membership in the family of Jesus.

How do we live by God's will? The key, I suppose, is the concept of self-surrender. We surrender ourselves completely to the care of our loving Father in heaven, just as Jesus did, and allow him to provide for all our needs.

In that way, we profess, acknowledge, and celebrate our dependence on God, and on Jesus, who is our brother. May we rejoice today in that awareness.