

JANUARY 31, 2026 DEACON MICHAEL CARRERA

You know, friends, I was fascinated by our first reading today, where the Lord sent Nathan to David.

Nathan goes to David, and he tells him this elaborate parable about a rich man and a poor man.

The rich man had many herds and flocks of lamb, and then there's this poor man who had only one lamb, but he—he cared for her so well that he brought her into his family.

And then there's this traveller, who comes from afar, and the rich man wants to entertain him. And so, instead of taking one of his many lambs, he takes the one lamb from the poor man.

Now, David, hearing this, he—he replies the same way that you and I would probably reply. He says to Nathan, “What are you doing? Tell me who this person is so that I will bring justice to him.”

And then Nathan says to him, “David, it is you. You are the rich man.”

Now, friends, talk about an eye-opener, talk about a heart-opener, talk about being rattled to the core, so much so that David repents and he says, “I have sinned against the Lord.”

And we can almost feel the intensity of that beautiful psalm we heard echoing from David's lips as he says, “Create a clean heart in me, O Lord.” Oh, yes, “Create a clean heart in me, O Lord.”

And now we know that as we read down there are consequences to sin, but, friends, regardless of our sins, regardless of our wounds, God's mercy always prevails.

Why? Because God's love for us is bigger than our wounds, bigger than our old wounds, yes, bigger than our fresh wounds.

And, you know what, friends? We can relate to this, can we not? Of course we can, 'cause there are moments in our lives when we feel that we are living a life of faith, and we pray, we go to church, we receive the sacraments.

All is good. And you know what, friends? Even in a sincere way we may look to the sins of others and say, "Lord, thank you, that I do not have those sins or those—those types of temptations in my life."

And, yes, we are being sincere, but then something happens. There is an insight, or maybe there is a confrontation, and suddenly we realize that we have been blinded by our faith.

Yes, you see, we have been living a life of faith, but we have not—we have failed to become a life of faith.

And that's what we see in our Gospel passage today with these disciples.

They were with Jesus. Yes, they were with him. They were living a life of faith.

And then they get onto this boat, and suddenly the boat is rocked and they are—they are afraid, and they wake up the Lord so hastily.

"Teacher, do you want us to perish?"

Jesus gets up, he rebukes the storm, and then he says to them, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still not have faith?"

You see, friends, the disciples, yes, they were living a life of faith, but they had failed to become a life of faith, 'cause to become a life of faith we need to take a real good, close look at ourselves.

Yes, we need to move despite the fear, we need to connect to the realness of Christ in our lives, and, yes, friends, maybe on a daily basis we need to say to ourselves, “Create a clean heart in me, O Lord,” and allow the grace of those words to rattle us to the core.

Where we come to the realization, where we ascend to the understanding that, regardless of what we may have done or what we may have failed to do, God’s love for us is bigger than our wounds—yes, bigger than our old wounds, bigger than our fresh wounds.

And if there was ever a man who connected to the realness of Christ in his life, it was St. John Bosco, who we celebrate today.

Yes, Don Bosco, as he was affectionately known, was the founder of the Salesian Order.

Don Bosco had an audacity of faith. Oh, friends, that is a good word. Yes, he had an audacity of faith.

So strong that he was able to look beyond the brokenness of the world, to look beyond the brokenness of his own church at that time, and bring the Gospel message to these abandoned youth in Turin, Italy.

Yes, he—he gave them a roof over their head, he gave them whatever scraps of food he could find, he taught them the power of prayer and having a personal relationship with Jesus.

And he gave them the tools to release them from the captivity of sin by sharing with them the redemptive power of confession, the nourishing power of the holy Eucharist, where Jesus is present, body, blood, soul, and divinity.

And, of course, friends, the healing power of the blessed sacrament, where we sit before the Lord and we do nothing. Everything is done for us as he heals our wounds, or maybe just holds us and refreshes us.

And, of course, St. John Bosco, Don Bosco, would say to us, “If you feel lost, if you feel lonely, if you feel confused in your faith, go to the blessed mother.”

Yes, go to Mary, help of Christians, that she may open your eyes and, yes, open your heart, and help you connect to the realness of Christ in your life.

So that you can also ascend, yes, ascend to that understanding, where you not only begin to live your faith, but you become your faith. Yes, you become your faith.

And you come to the understanding that God’s love for you—and, yes, friend, I really do mean you, yes, God’s love for you—is bigger than your wounds, bigger than your old wounds, and, yes, friend, bigger than your fresh wounds.

Believe it. Live it.

In a special way today, on this feast of Don Bosco, St. John Bosco, let us become it. Let us become the fullness of our faith.