

January 09, 2021
Saturday after Epiphany
1 Jn 5:5-13
Ps 147:12-13, 14-15, 19-20
Lk 5:12-16

JEALOUSY AND ENVY!

What is the difference between jealousy and envy? A certain Dr. Gary Collins made this distinction in an article from **Homemade** magazine in 1985 when he said, **"To envy is to want something which belongs to another person...In contrast, jealousy is the fear that something which we possess will be taken away by another person."** On another psychology article, a contrast was made between the two. It says: **"Envy is the emotion when you want a possession someone else has. Jealousy is the emotion when you fear you may be replaced in the affection of someone you love or desire."**

Why did I start contrasting jealousy and envy? I made this contrast because of the reaction of John's disciples to what Jesus was doing. The reaction they showed was not envy but jealousy. They were afraid that Jesus will take away, if not lessen, their ministerial work. Thanks be to God, John corrected their negative emotion. He encouraged them to rejoice rather than be jealous with what his cousin was doing. He reiterated to them again that he was not the Christ, Jesus was. He was, basically, telling his disciples – **"He was the man!"** Thus, with humility, John proclaimed: **"He must increase; I must decrease."**

The attitude of John the Baptist with regard to doing ministry is a good reminder, at the same time, a challenge for us to always check our emotions particularly in dealing with new ministers. **Are we jealous and feel threatened when new ones are joining us? Or do we handle it with joy and gratitude that new ones are stepping up?**

When we are not happy seeing new ones joining us, that is a big problem. We will be a stumbling block as regards the growth of the Christian community. Such attitude is not stewardship at all. A steward is not jealous seeing new ones stepping up and be involved in ministry. A steward usually rejoices and grateful to God for inspiring others to respond to the call. A steward knows how to side-step so others can pass through and be engaged in the life of the Church.

As we continue our Eucharistic celebration, let us pray for each other, whether we are doing ministry or not, that God may cleanse our hearts from the negative attitudes of jealousy and envy. Instead, we ask him to put gratitude and joy in our hearts all the days of our lives.

God bless us all!