

Reflection Friday Week 16 – 2023

Reminded again and again of the parable of the Sower, it is apparent that God certainly wants us to bear fruit. God wants the gift of faith he has given us to be a source of goodness, life and nourishment for others. The commandments that Moses received on Mount Sinai offers the means for us to do that. If the commandments were inscribed on stone, it is improbable that they would have been lengthy which is why they are referred to as the decalogue (ten words). This means they were delivered as positive words to guide our lives as a family community in a way that all will benefit.

Pope Francis explained that using “*word*” instead of “*commandment*” highlights the difference between receiving an order and noticing that someone is trying to speak with us. It sets the mood for a dialogue between the one who speaks and the one who listens: the texts comprising the *Decalogue* aim to establish a relationship between God and his people... Pope Francis recalls how Satan deceived Adam and Eve: “He wanted to convince them that God has forbidden them to eat the fruit of the tree of good and evil to keep them in submission. The challenge is precisely this: Is the first rule that God gave to man the imposition of a despot who forbids and compels, or is it the care of a father who cares for his young and protects them from self-destruction? Is it a word or is it a command?”

Considering that the original text says “*word*” and not “*commandment*” reminds us that, as Francis explains, “a command is a kind of communication that does not require dialogue. The word, on the other hand, is the essential means of relationships as dialogue. A word is received, communication is given, and the commandments are words of God: God communicates Himself in these ten Words, and awaits our response.”

God hopes we will bear fruit!