

### 23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time – A

- What should we do when we see someone sin?
  - Risky business – who do you think you are? Are you better than me?
  - EZ and MT are pretty clear that we should DO something
    - Even give directions on how we should deal with sinful people
    - But it's the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading I think that's the key today
      - ROM tells us what our attitude should be doing this
      - And that makes all the difference
        - Love for your neighbor is fulfillment of every law
        - When we see sin, we try to correct it – with LOVE
          - MT&EZ stress the obligation we have
          - ROM shows us how to go about it
  - If we proceed with love then:
    - We're not setting out to win an argument
    - We're not setting out to prove the other wrong
    - "Love does no evil to the neighbor"
    - Love doesn't humiliate - Love doesn't shame - Love isn't sarcastic
    - Love restores the other – renews – re-unites
      - Tired mother serves burnt toast and jam at the end of a long day
      - Father eats it without a word
      - Kids ask why
      - Burnt toast never hurt anyone but harsh words do
      - How you correct someone matters
    - Correcting the sinner with compassion, sincerely caring for the welfare of the other bears good fruit
    - Correction seeks to bring out the goodness in the other, seeks to motivate, to reveal unsuspected sources of strength, revitalize ideals, to find and encourage what seems lost – HARD TO DO
      - Two tribes in Andes – highland and lowland people
      - Highlanders attack a village and steal a baby
      - Lowlanders never climb mountains, didn't know the trails, how to get over cliffs – but they sent troops to rescue the baby
      - After days struggling to get up, without success, they run into the mother coming down, with the baby
      - HOW – WE COULDN'T – HOW DID YOU
      - It wasn't your baby
    - The lost baby is our brother in sin
- Love finds a way to encourage, to motivate, to strengthen – to bring out the goodness in the other
  - We all can agree what is wrong is wrong
  - Correction isn't a discussion to prove the wrong to be wrong
  - Correction, in love, is finding a way to bring the brother home
  - It's not easy – it's difficult & awkward and puts us at risk of losing a friend
  - But because we love, it is not an option
    - EZ – if you don't speak out I will hold you responsible –
    - Our salvation depends on it

- Our salvation depends on how well we love our brother