**31/ 8/ 25**

**Hebrews 13: 1-8, 15-16**

**13**Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. **2**Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. **3**Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

**4**Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral. **5**Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said,

“Never will I leave you;  
    never will I forsake you.”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews%2013&version=NIV#fen-NIV-30247a)]

**6**So we say with confidence,

“The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid.  
    What can mere mortals do to me?”[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews%2013&version=NIV#fen-NIV-30248b)]

**7**Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. **8**Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

have an altar from which those who minister at the tabernacle have no right to eat.

**15**Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name. **16**And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

Hebrews 13 is the concluding chapter of the Book of Hebrews. It is the end after a series of practical instructions for Christian living, as well as a whole lot of theological truths presented in the preceding chapters. The whole chapter 13, or the whole Book of Hebrews can be grouped into three main categories: personal conduct, community responsibilities, and the supremacy of Christ.

The chapter begins with a call to brotherly love among believers . v. 1:Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. **2**Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Be hospitable. Make soup, offer coffee and tea, welcome those who walk into St David’s , we practise hospitality for our own parishioners, we also practise hospitality for the strangers, that is why we operate the thrift shop, that is why we manage our café. We serve, as Jesus served. We love, as Jesus loves. We welcome, as Jesus opens his arms to embrace and to welcome, with no bias, no discrimination, no rejection, no refuse entry.

Practise hospitality to the point, that we express empathy for the suffering, the poor, the unemployed, the homeless, the disabled. v. **3** Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering. … Let us always show concerns for the mistreated, the women and men, the youths and the teens…they have no choice, but to run away from their own home which is unsafe, they are not able to pack anything in a hurry, as they are in danger, when they are abused and assaulted because of family violence.

Think about the prisoners. Well, we may think they are the offenders, they are the criminals, they kill people, they hurt people, they bash people.. their wife, their children… don’t they deserve being locked up behind bar, why do they deserve mercy and hospitality, why do they deserve visits from chaplains and pastors.

Being very busy as a parish priest I also worked as a prison chaplain . I took a day each week to drive a long way to visit the inmates in a prison. Some of my parishioners complaint and couldn’t understand why I didn’t visit the wealthy parishioners, to impress them for more offerings and givings, why to waste time on those outcasts and the despicable ? Why, wd you know why … because I take Jesus’ commands and teachings very seriously. On Matthew’s Gospel chapter 25, we hear this : One day Jesus will sit on his throne in heavenly glory, dividing the sheep and the goats, some were put on the right, and some on the left… speaking of the goats, Jesus rebuked ‘ depart from me , you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink. I was a stranger and you did not invite me in. I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me. … Jesus said, I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me. ‘ ( Matthew 25: 43, 45 )

Who are the least, who are those we feel least willing to serve, to care, to talk with . Should we make some extra effort to connect with them , to associate with them, to understand them… as Jesus identifies with them lovingly.

Serve the least, and also honor the noble, the people who serve God so faithfully and tirelessly, like many of you sitting here today. How about those who are licensed to minister. As any a ordained or a lay minister, like any public figure, he or she is at risk of all rumours, suspicions and accusations. Being a clergy doing God’s work with integrity, being a preacher preaching with God’s heart and God’s calling, being a authentic Christian, simply serve and obey God in every walk, don’t they deserve respect and understanding? Don’t they require support and affirmation? Hebrews 13 : **7**Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. **8**Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Jesus is always the same loving and right and correct and perfect. We wish all Christians leaders are doing well for Jesus, and all Christian leaders are speaking clearly and purely the word of God. For me, I like to listen to good sermons, but I like it more, to listen to a preacher with good conduct , good manner and good behaviour, who lives a authentic Christian life, who demonstrates Christian morals , whose godly character continuous , ongoing , constant and consistent. The Bible asks us to consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.

I have been courageous and resilient over the years of tough time in life and in ministry. I continue being faithful and joyful, as I know “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?”

The author here echoes with King David on Psalm 56: 9-13 , when he was surrounded and attacked by the Philistines, he trusted God and prayed, ‘ Then my enemies will turn back when I call for help. By this I will know that God is for me. In God , whose word I praise, in the Lord, whose word I praise- In God I trust, I will not be afraid. What can man do to me ? “ David’s faith in God built on his experience with God.. like me, or like you, David could witness again and again God’s immediate presence when he needed help, particularly when he was intimidated and harassed by others, when he was in danger and lots of troubles, David testified this… What can man do to me… for you have delivered me from death and my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before God in the light of life.

Psalm 118: 6-8 ‘ The Lord is with me, I will not be afraid. What can man do to me? The Lord is with me, he is my helper. I will look in triumph on my enemies. ‘

So friends, trust God and trust Jesus , always remember the Supremacy of Christ : **15**Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name. **16**And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

And the wonderful benediction to conclude **: 20**Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, **21**equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.