

More than 30 years ago I lived in a rectory near the home of my father's half first cousin. As we visited I began to learn some of the secrets of my father's family. My grandfather James P. O'Connor was born in Albany in 1860. In his early twenties he went to work for the railroad. He joined the railman's union, the Knights of Labor. Because he joined the Knights of Labor he was banned from the railroad.

So he did what any decent Irishman would do, he opened up a saloon. It was a disastrous move because he turned out to be an alcoholic, unfortunately a violent alcoholic. The story goes that he would come home at night and beat up his boys, my father among them.

As a result my father was a rather earthy man and so I heard a lot of fancy language as a child. By the way my mother was a pure saint.

On occasion, my father would describe someone who irritated him or was a phony as half baked. You may have heard the phrase yourself. Today's Gospel reminds me of that phrase. There is the person who sells all that he has to buy the field where the treasure is buried. There is the merchant who sells all, everything he has to buy the pearl of great price. The fisherman who collects fish of every kind.

This is the Kingdom of God. Jesus invites us, encourages us to go for it!! Go for the Kingdom with your whole heart. Jesus is urging us not to be halfhearted, only half alive.

In the Book of Revelation we read these words, "Because you are neither hot nor cold but only lukewarm, I will vomit you out of my mouth." Strong words of course, maybe over done; yet they are a warning.

A true short cut to living a full life is sharing your bread with the poor, the hungry and giving aid to widows and orphans in distress.

Jesus tells us we must pray always and never cease! If we can, pray always.

If we can, surrender our lives to the presence and action of God – abandon our lives to God!

Join yourself today with Jesus in the Eucharist in offering yourself to God.