

When I was a young boy in grade school, I got the opportunity to serve Bishop Gibbons Mass. He was Bishop of Albany. I was thrilled. I was one of his altar boys for 5 years. I really came to respect and love this man, Bishop Gibbons. He played a large part in my attraction to the priesthood. His motto as a bishop were words contained in today's Gospel "Ut omnes unumsint; "that they all may be one". Jesus prayer at the Last Supper.

Last week I spoke to you about three issues that are causing divisions in our country; racism, abortion and immigration. It's no secret that there are several issues which are dividing our Catholic Church at this time; the LGBT issue, the sexual scandal, celibacy; birth control, women priests, the desire of many to go back to the Latin Mass, the loss of our youth to the faith; the list goes on.

We don't need to see "eye to eye" on all these issues but we need to listen to Jesus prayer "that they all may be one." The church is not about right and wrong, it's about loving one another. Jesus says clearly "Love one another as I have loved you. By this people will know you are my disciples." We don't need to correct one another's report card. We are called to love. This is the way the Church will grow. This is the way we will touch the hearts of our youth.

Remember the words of Jesus at the Last Judgment; "come you who are blest by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me... whatever you did for one of these least brothers or sisters of mine, you did for me." This is our way of loving one another.

Several years ago my sister told me that one of her children was gay. I felt stunned but then I remembered Jesus' words, 'By this will all people know you are my disciples, if you love one another. I will not stop loving my niece.