

July 14-15, 2007
Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Deuteronomy 30:10-14 Colossians 1:15-20 Luke 10:25-37

There are times that following the rules may be wrong and breaking the rules may be right. A common defense of German soldiers accused of holocaust crimes against humanity was that 'they were only following orders.' The Nuremberg War Crime Trials clearly defined that obeying an immoral order is both immoral and illegal, a legal defense also contained within the U.S. military code of justice. In our Gospel selection from Luke we hear the story of what we paraphrase as 'The Good Samaritan'. In our hearing/reading of this passage it might not strike us with the same force as it would have the people of Jesus' day. In order to get a fuller effect, substitute the words 'Al Queda Operative' or 'Taliban' in place of 'Samaritan' and suddenly you get a different impression. Those that bypassed the beaten man all had good justification to do so, ritual purity, separation of social classes, etc. The Samaritan, a person despised by the Jews, also had perfectly good grounds to equally ignore the fellow...BUT his compassion for a fellow human being overcame his excuses. Want to push this even further...let's insert the words 'illegal Mexican' for 'Samaritan'. Now, there are probably some supposed Christians who would be very happy to let illegal Mexicans die while trying to cross the hot desert...and they get upset when anyone offers them aid or comfort. These are the sort of folk who don't like the words of Jesus to get in the way of their feelings or sense of how politics and faith should dwell in separate zones. Sometimes, being a disciple of Jesus means that breaking the rules is a moral imperative...and sometimes following the letter of the law is far from the heart of Christ. Even though the Fourth of July was a couple of weeks ago, it is sometimes important to remember that The Gospel and the Constitution are not equal.....and I think most of us would understand that while life here in the USA is pretty good, it is not heaven. Oh yeah...another thing...can you believe that there actually people that think that God is an American? Yes, we are Americans, but as disciples of Jesus Christ we are called to not base our relationship with God on national fervor or culture. Jesus always calls us out of ourselves, to embrace bigger and loftier, more selfless concepts. Evil makes us small, petty, narrow and selfish. How about you, broken any rules/laws lately?

Thank you for sharing this July weekend with our community, it is good to gather in worship and prayer. This is the final opportunity to get involved with this week's 'Galilee By The Sea' Summer Event on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Even if you cannot come for all three nights you are welcome to come and enjoy any of the individual nights or two out of three. Simply come and chat up the Galilee citizens for info on where to go when you arrive. Bulletins are available for your perusal upon your departure, please take one with you and perhaps a spare one for any neighbors who have moved into your community. As the summer heat sizzles, remember, you are loved. FKB