

February 5, 2006
Fr. Larry Richards

Ok, so let's deal with the readings today, and I always know you get nervous when I talk that way, but we start with the first reading, and the first reading, I don't know if anybody can ever relate to that one, that's Job... "All hope is gone and I will never have happiness anymore. Is not man's life on earth a drudgery?" And we all have those days, those weeks, those months or whatever it may be where everything looks bad, but remember Job, and remember that that is where he was. But we know the end of the story, that God made all things work together for Job when he kept trusting in God – "though he slay me yet I will praise him." "The Lord has given, the Lord has taken away." "Blessed be the name of the Lord." He kept trusting in God no matter what. Now let's jump to the gospel. In the gospel, we have someone that is in that reality and that person we call the mother in-law of Peter and we talked about the mother in-law of Peter a couple of weeks ago, huh? And here it is...now you have to get into this reading here, just a little bit. And it starts out... "On leaving the synagogue, Jesus enters the house of Simon with Andrew and James and John. Simon's mother in-law lay sick with fever and they immediately told Him about her..." Ok, now let's break that up a little bit. The synagogue, of course, is the Church and they had to leave The Synagogue and when they left the synagogue, they invited the God of the Universe into their home. First thing. We have to leave – that when we leave the church, we have to take Jesus with us. And the problem is, I would say, most Catholics – nobody here- but most Catholics – when they leave Church, they leave God there too. And then they continue to do what they are going to do for the rest of their life, you know "this is my God time, this is me and God at Church, look at how holy I am, and this my rest of my time – God got my hour or an hour and ten minutes or hour and a half, depending on who preaches..." the priest before me preached longer than me! An hour and ten minutes for the 9 AM Mass – isn't that good? So they were all excited – it was just like having me! So, here we go, and we leave our Jesus here at church and then we go home and do what we want! And the problem is that means that he is not in charge. What we have to do is take Jesus with us and invite Him into our home, into our work, into our schools. We need to invite Jesus with us home. And so, what that means is we take Him with us. We don't invite Him the way Peter did – we take Him inside of us and then we treat the people at home the same way we treat people in church. Again, I have told you the story, those of you who are older and have been with me for awhile, about years ago when I was listening to someone on the radio, and it was a preacher and he had just talked to one of his parishioners, and she was crying and he asks her "what are you crying for?" "Well last night I was praying with my daughter..." and he said "well that's a good thing." "Well no, because when I was praying with my daughter she said 'God bless mommy, and God bless daddy, and God bless grandma and grandpa and God bless Snoopy...'" And he said "well that's a great thing." "Well, that isn't what she concluded with. She says 'and please God, let mommy be as nice at home as she is to the people at church.'" HMMMMMMMM. Can you imagine there are people like that? That there are people who are really nice at church and then not nice at home? Can you imagine there are people like that? I know that we don't know anybody like that. But the reality is that sometimes we do that – we leave Jesus here and

as soon as we get out to the car or as soon as we get home, we become “something on wheels” as some of you know! Huh? We do what we are going to do and that’s the way it is! “This is home, this is church!” You make the kids perfect in church...kill you when we get home!! Ah huh, that’s nice! You know, the reality is, what kind of people are we? Do we bring Christ home with us? Is Christ in our homes? Is He in charge of our homes? Is He there at the dinner table? Is Christ there is what we have to think about! And if not, don’t leave this church today without taking Him home with you and saying “Lord, I want to be here the same way I am when I am in front of your presence in the Blessed Sacrament.” Because no matter where I am, you are. First thing, you have to take Jesus home with you. The second thing you have to do is that you have to tell Jesus about the people you have at home. Now, guess what happened here today? Peter takes Jesus into his house and he tells Jesus about his mother in-law. Jesus knew all about his mother in-law – He was God. But, Peter’s job was to tell Jesus about his mother in-law and then Peter got out of the way and let Jesus be God to his mother in-law. Let me say that again...Peter told Jesus about his mother in-law and then he got out of the way and let God be God with his family. Are there any questions? What you and I have to do with our family is we go home and we tell Jesus about them. You are the mother, you are the father, you are the kids...and what you and I have to do is intercede for them. Pray for them. Now, hopefully everybody that is a family person here – the first thing you do every day is pray for your family by name. That isn’t like “God bless the family, Lord.” No, that’s “God bless my wife...so and so, God bless my husband...so and so...God bless Tommy and Jamie and Jaxsen...this is what you do...you pray for them by name. And that means you are telling Jesus about your family...that’s what you have to do! You have to tell Jesus about your family and then you have to let Jesus be God in your family. Not you – Him! Peter told Jesus about his mother in-law, and then Jesus took care of it. You and I have to take care of our family, and the way that we do this is we tell Jesus about them, and we get out of the way. Ok? Are there any questions? You tell Jesus about them, and then you get out of the way! Yea, it sounds nice, doesn’t it? So, that is the second thing we have to do, and let Jesus be the one. And again, a good thing to do is write their names down on a piece of paper, write the people’s names down who are hurting and bring that before the Lord every day and tell Jesus about them. When you intercede for them, great things can happen! Miracles can happen in your home because of you, the person who prays and tells Jesus about the problems, the sickness, the unbelief, and Jesus can do great things. But we don’t just leave Him at home – we have to take Jesus to work with us, we have to take Jesus to school with us – it is an important reality that Jesus Christ, who is God wants to be in our work, wants to be in our school. You know, last week one of our parishioners here told me about someone who was at an earlier Mass and came up to him and said “get the hell out of my Church!” Because the older community doesn’t like the newer community – well it’s always a fight of something! And that isn’t bringing Christ to your work! That’s bringing Satan to your work! Whenever we bring division – division is not of God unless it’s division of holiness! But other division is of Satan! That is why, three weeks ago I put in the bulletin – I stepped out of the way and I let God speak to the community when I quoted that scripture verse. And it says “if you continue to cut each other up in pieces, you will end up in mutual destruction. That’s God word, not mine! You’re tired of hearing me. But what we have to do is when we go home – when I’m with my friends – do I bring them

Jesus, or do I bring them my opinions and my complaining? Or, do I bring them Jesus? Do I tell Jesus about them? When I am at my work, do I do that? When I am at my school, do I do that? Or, do I bring myself? We have to bring Jesus, not ourselves. And when we are there, we have to be praying for people, not complaining about people. Praying for people, praying for people, telling Jesus about them. Someone came to me the other day and they sat there and said to me “Father, you know this person is really irritating me” and he was a high school kid and I said “you know what you have to do?” Did you ever read that book, The Greatest Salesman In The World? You ever read that? Well it is a great book, and you spend about a month on each chapter and one of the chapters – it is a good thing to do and it’s a hard thing if you really do it – is whenever you meet somebody for the first time, or whenever you are sitting there talking to anybody – your husband, your wife, your kids, a stranger you just meet, someone you give the sign of peace to...in your heart, you look at them and say “I really love you.” You say it in your heart. You don’t say it when you first meet them, they’ll think your nuts! But you sit there, in your heart, whenever you look at any person and you say to them “I really love you” from your heart to every person you meet. When you’re fighting with your husband – you look at them, before you start yelling – and say “I really love you. That means that your needs are more important than mine.” When you want to fight with your wife, you look at her and say “I really love you. That means your needs are more important than mine.” That’s how you start an argument!! Ha Ha!! Isn’t that nice? You sit there and you become – bring Christ in love to those people. And then, once we bring our families – because we have to take care of our families first, then Jesus went and left the family – He left the family because everybody kept bringing Him people and He was healing them, but then He left them and went beyond. So, what we have to do is we can never be just contacted about us and about my family and my parish. It has to be “I am here to bring everybody healing! To preach the good news – to bring Christ to everybody!” You know, some people want us stay this nice, little pleasant community – “oh, we’re so good.” Then we should die. If we are not about bringing everybody to Christ, then we are not followers of Jesus. Jesus left His own family – left the place He was preaching, and went out to somebody else. Because He says “my job is to go out and to bring others to the reality of Christ.” Once you and I have dealt with our family, and dealt with our church, we need to go out and bring others to this reality. It is not about us! It is about Jesus. Ya got it? Get it? Gonna do it? Good.