

25 Ord A 2017 Surprise Mission Talk Isa 55:6-9;Phil 1:20-24&27;Mat 20:1-16

INTRODUCTION

I fly a Cherokee Warrior II airplane to over 30 small villages in the largest and longest mission in the world. It cost \$16,000 per year to operate my airplane. The Mission incorporates Bristol Bay and the Aleutian Chain of Alaska. It is larger than the state of Maine. We named it the Saint Paul Mission. Saint Paul challenges each one of us to take the Gospel "To the Ends of the Earth." I was overjoyed and surprised when God called me to this adventurous and daring mission.

WHO ARE WE?

The Alaskan Saint Paul Mission is a poor, native Yupik community that desperately needs help to build faith and family life. I am here today to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ like I do in those 30 villages. It is a gospel of conversion, hope, and mercy. I am here today to invite you to be missionaries with me. Fly with me to a remote Alaskan village like Naknek, Manokotac, Koligonik, and Ugashik.

DANGEROUS

In January 2017, a good friend of mine crashed. Mat was flying down the Aleutian Chain and got iced up. Within seconds his plane basically fell out of the sky. Fortunately, he and his passenger survived with broken bones and frost bite. I felt sick to my stomach and couldn't fly again for two weeks. Fr Kelly wasn't so lucky. He crashed and was killed on the way to a Palm Sunday mass in Togiak, Alaska in 2002. I have taken on the call to be the missionary pilot for these people.

SURPRISE: SAME WAGE LESS WORK

The workers in the gospel were surprised that the owner gave those who worked less the same wage. Here is the surprise: Out of genuine concern for the unemployed workers who started late, and for their families, the vineyard owner paid them the same wage. The wage was not proportionate to the work they did. It was proportionate to their needs.

BIBLE FULL OR SURPRISES

The Father in the prodigal son was surprised when his son returned after squandering his inheritance. Peter was surprised when Jesus told him to throw in his net, surprise: a net full of fish. Surprise, Love your enemies. Surprise, the last shall be first and the first last. Saint Augustine believed that in a deathbed

baptism, no matter what kind of life you have led, surprise, you go straight to heaven. Pope Francis is known as the “cold call pope” for making surprise phone calls to people around the world. Talk about a surprise!!

CALLED TO SURPRISE BUSH VILLAGERS

In the Saint Paul Mission, Alaskans yearn for the sacraments. The people are lonely, forgotten, and struggling with addictions. The gospel is calling us today to surprise these isolated Alaskan villagers. With your spiritual and financial support I can continue to fly in to celebrate mass for them, baptize them, and anoint them. I administer the sacraments in houses, canneries, fish camps, schools, and community centers.

CONCLUSION

This week surprise someone spiritually and financially by supporting the Saint Paul Mission. Your donation will enable me to continue to bring the sacraments to those who live in remote areas of Alaska (518 Words).

CALL UP CHILDREN, HAND OUT AIRPLANE PIN, TIE KNOTS

When I walk out to my airplane to fly, I get a nice surprise. Would the children please come forward. Father Kelly taught me this before he died. (PROP TIE KNOTS, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). When I untie my plane to take-off, the knots remind me to pray for safety. When I tie the plane down after flight, the knots remind me to pray for all those who have generously supported the Saint Paul Mission. I ask God to help me show love and mercy to all the people living in the remote villages. I ask that the children, when zipping up and closing their school backpacks use the same method so that they won't forget to pray for my safety and the spiritual health of the people in the remote Alaskan villages. (Give Airplane Holy Spirit pin) (777 Words).

POSSIBLE STORIES DURING SECOND COLLECTION

SCATTERED CATHOLICS

Lack of Presence, Catholics scatter and convert to other religions, Russian Orthodox, Moravian. We lost Betty. After being gone for five years, people had scattered. The first mass at Clarks point in July of 2016 we had three people. I vowed to fill the community center by trying to fly to the small village every week. By Easter 2017, 35 or so out of 45 villagers showed up for mass, After being back a

year.

TEETH CLEANING

Not a lot of dental hygienists in the Alaskan bush. Fortunately for me, I discovered a family of Catholics in Igiugig, a village 48 miles north east of Dillingham, population about 60. Stacy, the mom, is a dental hygienist. After meeting with their two teenagers to prepare them for confirmation, Stacy would clean my teeth. Just last week I flew in and she cleaned them for me.

SCHLAGEL CRASHES

In the middle of July 2017, another friend and parishioner crashed with two passengers. Tom Schlagle took off from Shannon's Pond (two miles from the Dillingham airport) and did not get enough lift to clear the tree line. He crashed into the trees with his Beaver and totaled it. God was with him. All three walked away.

SIDEWAYS

While trying to land in Dillingham, the wind picked up to 40 mph. I was trying to fly directly over the runway to set up my approach, but In order to fly directly of it, I had to turn the plane sideways.

DOUBLE ASHED

I flew to Clarks Point for Ash Wednesday. I asked five year old Aubry and six year old Kenzie to put ashes on my forehead. I thought one would trace a cross on my forehead, and the other would trace of that cross. They ended up making to ash crosses on my forehead

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MARY'S DRESS

Sometimes I get caught in bad weather. There is freezing rain, mist, fog, severe winds, and snow storms. To remind me of the Risen Lord, I have a miniature replica of the Blessed Virgin Mary's dress hanging on my carburetor heat switch. A gift from a Guatemalan woman. It reminds me that since Jesus was raised from the dead, he is alive and with me.

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MISSION STATS:

Saint Paul Mission the largest geographical mission in the world.

Mission covers over 33,000 square miles

Archdiocese is 136,000 square miles (twice the size of Texas)

(if you cut Alaska in half, Texas would be the third largest state)

Alaskan Catholic Population: 35,000

4 Catholics per square mile

29 parishes/missions

21 in remote areas

8 priests short

CHALLENGES

Roads: No roads to connect some 30 villages in the Mission

Airplanes: Villages rely on airplanes for food, supplies, ministry

Geography: Catholics live 100's of miles apart

Anchorage to Dillingham is 350 air miles, to Dutch Harbor 795

Weather: unpredictable, severe, -30, gale winds, ice, snow, freezing rain

Culture: Yupik Eskimo, some Hispanic, Filipino, and Caucasian

Mass Frequency: Sometime never, once a year, once a month

COSTS

Heating Church and Rectory: 13,000 per year

Grocery's: double (half gallon milk \$8.99)

Travel: \$1000 every visit, i.e. Anchorage-Dillingham-King Salmon Round Trip

Aircraft Fuel: \$6.50 per Gallon

Airplane Budget: \$16,000 per year to budget Airplane for priest pilot

CONCLUSION:

Where does the money go?

Airplane Budget: Travel to remote villages

Heating fuel for Church, Rectory

Your donation will help Catholics in remote areas to receive sacraments

RISKS

Fr Kelly crashed into a mountain and died

Ice fog covered my entire windshield, Dillingham
Stuck in Mud Portage Creek
Engine blew up on Take off
Got in Tom's wake going to Manakotak
Fuel tanks on empty, Ugashik
Without a presence we lose catholics to Russian orthodox

Your donation directly helps bring the Sacraments to the ends of the earth.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL: 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

Celebrant

Let us now bring our prayers and petitions to our Heavenly Father.

Deacon/Lector

For all who proclaim the gospel with their lives, especially teachers and missionaries, let us pray to the Lord.

For all who labor in the vineyards of peace, especially national leaders and elected representatives, we pray to the Lord.

For all who strive to end disease and suffering, especially doctors and medical researchers, we pray to the Lord.

For all who work toward fair labor practices, especially lawmakers and union leaders, we pray to the Lord.

For those who have died (especially): that the Lord of all gentleness will welcome them into his peaceful presence, let us pray to the Lord.

In Silence let us now add our own intentions for our families, our community, our country, and the world....., We pray to the Lord.

Celebrant

Generous God, hear our prayers and answer them in your great love and mercy. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Isaiah 55:6-9

Seek the LORD while he may be found, call him while he is near. Let the scoundrel forsake his way, and the wicked man his thoughts; Let him turn to the LORD for mercy; to our God, who is generous in forgiving. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are my ways above your ways and my thoughts above your thoughts.

Philippians 1:20-24&27

My eager expectation and hope is that I shall not be put to shame in any way, but that with all boldness, now as always, Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me life is Christ, and death is gain. If I go on living in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. And I do not know which I shall choose. I am caught between the two. I long to depart this life and be with Christ, (for) that is far better. Yet that I remain (in) the flesh is more necessary for your benefit. Only, conduct yourselves in a way worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear news of you, that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind struggling together for the faith of the gospel,

Mat 20:1-16

"The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out at dawn to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with them for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. Going out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and he said to them, 'You too go into my vineyard, and I will give you what is just.' So they went off. (And) he went out again around noon, and around three o'clock, and did likewise. Going out about five o'clock, he found others standing around, and said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?' They answered, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You too go into my vineyard.' When it was evening the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Summon the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and ending with the first.' When those who had started about five o'clock came, each received the usual daily wage. So when the first came, they thought that they would receive more, but each of them also got the usual wage. And on receiving it they grumbled against the landowner, saying, 'These last ones worked

only one hour, and you have made them equal to us, who bore the day's burden and the heat.' He said to one of them in reply, 'My friend, I am not cheating you. Did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what is yours and go. What if I wish to give this last one the same as you? (Or) am I not free to do as I wish with my own money? Are you envious because I am generous?' Thus, the last will be first, and the first will be last."