

## Homily - Easter 6 B - May 6, 2018

A few years ago, PBS premiered a documentary called “Happy,” which featured interviews with people around the world and with scientists involved in “happiness research.” When asked what they want from life, people everywhere said they just wanted to be happy. The further discovery focused on the fact that true happiness comes from doing things for others.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus says, “Love one another as I have loved you,” and in those words we are given the formula for our own happiness — not just here and now, but in the hereafter, as well. Reaching out to others in love is surely the key to happiness both now and into the future.

I draw your attention to a passage in today’s gospel that may escape our attention. Jesus says: “You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain...” Two words stand out: “chose” and “appointed.” Those words apply to us because we are baptized, baptized into Christ and into His church, his body here on earth.

Yes, our parents presented us for baptism, and God chooses to adopt us into his family because he always reaches out to his people. But what have we been chosen to do? Well, there are many answers to that question, and all the answers are true.

First, we have been chosen for joy. There should be no such thing as a gloomy Catholic. After all, we have been given the greatest gift of all, life, life now and life into eternity. Also, just as the PBS study affirms, in fulfilling the Christian mission of service to others, we will find joy and happiness. Again, this joy and happiness occur in this life and into eternal life.

Second, out of love God chose to love us so that we could love one another. We have been chosen out of love in order to love. I know that sounds like a revolving circle, but it emphasizes that love is our core value and core mission.

Third, because of love we have been chosen to be ambassadors of Christ and his message. In his own words, “I have appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain.” We spoke about Jesus and the vine and our responsibility to remain attached to the vine and to bear fruit. When anyone joins an organization, one is expected to participate in the club’s mission, goals, and objectives. The same is true of Christ’s church.

Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, has spoken forcefully and acted eloquently in reaching out to others to teach the message of Jesus, no matter who they are. Likewise, in our first reading, the early disciples began reaching out to non-Jews to preach the message of Christ.

Because of God's love for us, because of the ability to experience great joy in living that love, may all of us be willing to be visible ambassadors for the Christian message no matter where, no matter how and no matter when...as long as it is not too late...