

**31<sup>st</sup> SUN. in ORD. TIME (A-4)** (Sangre Retreat) **Are we sent or deleted?**

There's something in common in the Gospels when Jesus is angry: hypocrisy. He holds up the Pharisees and Scribes for their position in society, but says: "do not follow their example. For they preach but do not practice. They tie up heavy burdens...but do not lift a finger to move them." How would we feel if people were to say that about us?

In 1999, a 16-year old, who suffered seeing classmates and teachers gunned down by a victim of bullying, wrote following after the tragedy:

"The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings and shorter tempers, wider freeways but narrower view points; we spend more, but have less; we buy more, but enjoy it less. We have...more degrees, but less sense; more knowledge, but less judgment; more experts, yet more problems; more medicine, but less wellness.

We've multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values. We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often. We've learned how to make a living, but not a life; we've added years to life, but not life to years...We've conquered outer space, but not inner space. We've cleaned up the air, but polluted the soul; split the atom, but not our prejudice...

It is a time when technology can bring this letter to you, and a time when you can choose to make a difference...or hit the delete button."

(From a message on the internet on Oct 29, 1999)

Jesus speaks as adamantly today about hypocrisy, hard hearts, and the placing of undue burdens on others. A teenage prophet shared what she had learned from her short life! It is the truth! God, how we are putting burdens on our children! Our mission, should we choose to accept it, is to become prepared to lift the burdens life is bringing our children. It's never too late to listen to the Word of God and change.

A young girl challenged us to choose to make a difference or just plain delete ourselves from this existence. "The greatest among you must be your servant," Jesus said. Serving is helping people lighten the load of life. Serving is spending time with people who are hurting, and sharing our capacity to love with them. We must undo what we've done. How?

We must widen our view points, take our time, use our common sense, pray for better judgment, seek wellness, wholeness & holiness. We need to meet every new neighbor with kindness, clean up the air and replenish mother earth. We need to develop our inner space, drop our prejudice, better our morals, our character, deepen our relationships with ourselves, others and God; we need have fun, to be peacemakers, feed our bodies, minds and spirits as if they are temples, we need to laugh more. All this will make us the Stewards Jesus would have us be.

All of this we can have and we can do. It takes a commitment to make a difference. Don't push the delete button. Let Christ show us the way. Let us listen to our angels no matter what their age or their race, color, creed or religion might be. Let God be God, and let us make a difference that we have lived at all. After all, an apostle is one who is sent like an email, to make a difference by the message we deliver.