



Christ in Our Neighborhood

Prayer

Loving Father, You have given us the virtue of faith to follow Your Son. May we place our faith in Him alone and find, at the end of our journey on earth, a place with You in heaven. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Commentary

1st Reading: Wis 1:13-15; 2:23-24

Over the last two weeks, we have been focusing on the virtue of faith. We were reminded that we are called to rely not only on our five senses, but on our “sixth sense” of faith; even when trials come our way.

To be sure, we endure many trials throughout our lifetime, but, we are not without hope. Recall that our faith in God is first a response to God’s faith in us. God did not design us to fall on our face.

Kenneth Blanchard, author of “The One Minute Manager,” writes, “Help People Reach Their Full Potential. Catch Them Doing Something Right.” This is how God responds to us. Even if we should be reprimanded, God isn’t there to trip us up. God has faith in us and He wants us to reach our full potential.

This First Reading from Wisdom reminds us that God does not “rejoice in the destruction of the living.” Rather, God formed us “to be imperishable.” In the end, we place our faith in God because He was and is and always will be faithful to us.

God will never abandon those He loves.

Question

In what way do you recognize God’s fidelity to you?

Commentary

2nd Reading: 2 Cor 8:7, 9, 13-15

If we ever have a question about God’s fidelity toward us, St. Paul’s letter to the Corinthians is a reminder that, “though he was rich, for [our] sake he became poor, so that by his poverty [we] might become rich.”

13th Sunday in Ordinary Time

By descending from the heavens and becoming one with us, God placed Himself in a vulnerable position. What other god would do such a thing except our God who is faithful. Even when we do not believe in God, the Lord believes in us. He would lay down His life for us.

St. Paul expects us to respond to God’s fidelity by excelling in his “gracious act also.” He urges us to show our fidelity to God by being faithful to our brothers and sisters in Christ. To those who are in need, St. Paul urges us to supply their needs (food, clothing, etc.) through our abundance.

Ultimately, fidelity begins with hearts of charity and compassion. Fidelity is a response to God’s faith in us.

Question

In what way do you respond to God’s faithfulness toward you?

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Commentary

Gospel: Mark 5:21-43

In last week's Gospel, Jesus chastised His own disciples for their lack of faith in Him when they were being tossed about in the boat. These were His friends (His inner circle) who had been with Him for some time. Even still, they lacked faith.

In this week's Gospel, we read about two figures who were not among Jesus' inner circle. Nevertheless, they placed their faith in Him.

In the first case, we have a synagogue official who pleads with Jesus to save his daughter. In the second case, we have an "unclean" woman who dares to touch Jesus' cloak. Because of their faith in Him, their needs are met. Their faith had saved them.

Returning to our First Reading, we recall that God has no desire to trip us up or make us fall on our face. Instead, God, through Christ,

desires to restore us to health and help us regain our dignity. God does not abandon His creation. He is faithful to all — those within and without His inner circle — who place their faith in Him.

Question

How has your faith in the Lord restored and saved you?

This Week's Task

Consider picking up the book, "The One Minute Manager," by Kenneth Blanchard. Even if you have read it, consider reading it again. Or, at least attempt to adopt the following habit in your life to show that you believe in others as God believes in us:

"Catch people doing something right. People who feel good about themselves produce good results."

Prayer

The group offers the following prayer:

Lord, Make me a faithful, zealous apostle of your Church and grant me the grace that will enable me to proclaim your saving message to the brothers and sisters I meet on my journey today. May I live my Catholic faith with such evident conviction, and share it with such ardent zeal that I become a fruitful and effective fisher of souls for the Kingdom. Amen.

The prayer continues with Psalm 30

Psalm

Response: I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me.

I will extol you, O LORD, for you drew me clear and did not let my enemies rejoice over me.

O LORD, you brought me up from the netherworld; you preserved me from among those going down into the pit.

R. I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me.

Sing praise to the LORD, you his faithful ones,
and give thanks to his holy name.
For his anger lasts but a moment;
a lifetime, his good will.
At nightfall, weeping enters in,
but with the dawn, rejoicing.

R. I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me.

Hear, O LORD, and have pity on me;
O LORD, be my helper.
You changed my mourning into dancing;
O LORD, my God, forever will I give you thanks.

R. I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me.

Conclude with an Our Father

You
are
witnesses
of
these
things.